REVIEW

OF

Mr. MELVIL's laſt Piece againſt Mr. NICHOLS;

Occaſioned by

His numerous *Miſrepreſentations* of, and injurious *Reflections* upon the DISSENTERS in general, and the CALVINISTS in particular.

By *THOMAS GIBBONS.*

Avoid profane, and vain babblings, and oppoſitions of ſcience, falſely ſo called, which ſome profeſſing, have erred concerning the faith; 1 Tim. vi. 20, 21.

They bend their tongues like their bow for lies, but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; Jer. ix. 3.

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The Reader is desired to amend the following Errata, occasioned by the Author's Distance from the Press.

PAGE 7. line 11. for *Psa.* r. *Pet.* P. 14. l. 27. for *Apostles*, r. *Apostle*. P. 20. l. 4. for *God*, r. *God*. P. 28. l. 16. for *on*, r. *unto*. P. 35. l. 24. for 39*th*, r. 31*st*. P. 37. l. 34. for *Joh.* 10. 5. r. 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. P. 44. l. 25. after *Covenant*, add *an*. P. 44. l. 26. blot out *the*. P. 49. l. 25. after *Jews*, add *they were*. P. 49. l. 26. for *others*, r. *these*. P. 49. l. 28. after *both*, r. *so*. P. 67. l. 4. for *thought*, r. *though*. P. 46. l. 28. after "that is" add baptized.

AN IMPARTIAL

REVIEW

OF

Mr. MELVIL's laſt Piece againſt Mr. NICHOLS, &c.

I CAN ſafely ſay, that when Mr. *Melvil*'s laſt piece came into my hands, I had not the leaſt intention of drawing up a reply to it; becauſe I imagined that his firſt pamphlet againſt Mr. *Nichols* was a ſufficient ſpecimen of his rage and folly, and that it was almoſt impoſſible for him, or any other, to furniſh out more of either, than what he had diſcovered in his firſt piece; but by reading over his laſt productions *, I had the greateſt evidence I poſſibly could have, that a perſon by eight years unwearied ſtudy (for ſuch a length of time paſſed between the publiſhing of both the pamphlets) might make prodigious advances in calumny and folly, nay, carry things ſo

* I ſhall take the freedom for the generality to call it his productions, his pamphlet, &c. tho' I am perſuaded others were concerned in it, as will be obſerved hereafter.

far as to challenge the whole body of men of his ſentiments to find him his match in either.

THIS unworthy ungenteel treatment has given me a vaſt deal of ſurprize; not only becauſe he is a perſon that has gained, if report be true, a good inſight into learning; but likewiſe on the account of his having been a great traveller, and particularly very much acquainted with *Scotland*, where he had the greateſt opportunities of informing himſelf how that church profeſſed and maintained Calviniſm, and how agreeably the lives and converſations of its members were to ſuch ſacred principles. Nor could my ſurprize be taken off by a ſuppoſition that he had not theſe advantages of being a ſcholar, and being acquainted with *Scotland*, becauſe I was ſenſible that he had ſuch a conſiderable length of time, for cooling and ſerious reflections, if his ſpirits had been ruffled in writing the firſt treatiſe, that this ſecond performance might have been expected to have ſavoured more of a better temper. Thus it was with me for a conſiderable time, 'till at length a cloſe enquiry into matters, ſunk my ſurprize; for I was informed that Mr. *Melvil* had not only ſpent ſome of his days in *Scotland*, but was a native of that country, and ſo I eaſily imagined that he had brought over the angry temper of that people, though he had unhappily left behind the piety they are ſo remarkable for, to ſoften and regulate it. I was alſo aſſured that he was a violent man of the Tory Party, and that he had entered into a cloſe friendſhip, with ſome of his brethren, that were the moſt avowed and inveterate enemies to Diſſenters; one of whom I knew experimentally to be ſuch a one. I ſay, theſe conſiderations took off my ſurprize at Mr. *Melvil*'s unhandſome treatment; knowing that when a perſon is natuarally of a paſſionate ſpirit, and is ſtirred on by the evil incitements of others, he may, like *Saul*, level

as

as much fury and falſhood againſt the church of God, the honour of the Redeemer, and the faith of the Goſpel, as Mr. *Melvil* in his miſerable productions has done. I ſay theſe were my ſentiments of the matter, nor could I perſwade myſelf to think any otherwiſe; for charity and ſerious thought, forbid me to conſtrue it a deſire to advance his intereſt in the world, or a ſin committed againſt knowledge. Hence the pious mind of a chriſtian of the lower claſs, may be awakened to admire the diſtinguiſhing grace of God, in his hiding the myſteries of the Goſpel from the wiſe and prudent, and revealing them unto babes, *Mat.* xi. 25. And from this conſideration we may be all cautioned to obey the great biſhop of ſouls, 1. *Pet.* ii. 25. and to *call no man father on earth*, *Mat.* xxiii. 9.

It may now be highly neceſſary to acquaint my readers with the motives that inclined me to draw up, and publiſh the following remarks; and the firſt was, that I might be a means, if God pleaſed, of checking the vanity of the author, by diſcovering to him, that his performances are not able to do any ſervice to the church of *England*, or the *Arminian* ſcheme, and injure the cauſes of Nonconformity and Calviniſm, ſeeing there are many volumes in the world of that ſort filled with cunning objection and dexterity, both which our author is miſerably deſtitute of. A ſecond inducement was, that I might be made inſtrumental of convincing the author of his aggravated crime; for (as I think it will by and by plainly appear) he has not ſtopped at breaking one table of the law, offering an affront to the Almighty; but has alſo trifled with, and trampled upon the obligations of duty to his neighbour, in loading him with that ſcandal, which he is entirely clear of, and does not in the leaſt deſerve at his hands. A third and principal cauſe of my publiſhing this piece was, that I might

might give the meaner and weaker ſort of people an opportunity of forming a judgment about theſe heads of divinity; for tho' theſe matters have been debated long before this, on both ſides, yet theſe books are but in very few hands; and numbers of the inferior rank of chriſtians cannot conveniently allow time enough from their employments in life, to give them a diligent peruſal, if they had wherewithal to purchaſe them. A fourth thing, that inclined me to this undertaking, is, that I might ſo contend for the truth once delivered to the ſaints, as that I might thereby be found in the obſervance of that ſervice I owe to my God, conſidered in all the three ever-glorious Perſons, and thereby be made an inſtrument of inſtructing, comforting, and eſtabliſhing his people in faith and holineſs, as the truth is in Jeſus.

It is now proper to give my reader ſome ſmall account of the nature of the following piece. And in it, in the firſt place, I have not been very large in the review of this gentleman's pamphlet, but have drawn up thoſe thoughts I have given, into as ſhort a compaſs as poſſible, confining my obſervations to Mr. *Melvil*'s laſt treatiſe; being ſenſible that if once the ſeeming arguments in defence of his own ſentiments that are produced in his laſt performance are overturned, the ſubſtance of the other will entirely be anſwered; for as they are both the productions of Mr. *Melvil*, ſo there is ſcarce any variety of matter, tho' the ſame things may appear in different language. Secondly, I have not encumbred my treatiſe with his numerous, and almoſt endleſs repetitions, and therefore have paſſed over many pages of his book without any notice of the contents. Thirdly, I have not here entered upon * a cloſe full debate on

* If any perſon would ſee the points of Calviniſm clearly and fully handled, I would adviſe him to a ſet of ſermons in octavo,

on any of the truths our author denies; becauſe ſuch an attempt would of neceſſity have ſwelled into a large book, and ſo have broke in upon my chief aim, a ſuiting of what I have to ſay to the meaneſt capacities. A fourth, and laſt thing I would mention as to the nature of this piece, is a deſire that my reader would pardon me, if I have treated Mr. *M.* with a ſeverity of expreſſion in ſome places, becauſe I cannot but perſuade myſelf, that as he has not ſcrupled to ſcatter fire-brands, arrows, and death, *Pſa.* xxvi. 18, 19. and has made a pit and digged it, *Pſ.* vii. 15, 16. it will not be a breach of juſtice, if he falls into the ditch he has made, and finds his own miſchief returning upon his own head, and his own violent dealing upon his own pate.

HAVING thus kept my reader, perhaps, too long in the porch, in acquainting him of my deſign in drawing up, and the nature of the following piece, it is now high time to proceed to an examination of Mr. *Melvil*'s miſerable pamphlet. And, alas! we cannot look into the firſt page, but we find his fury and falſhood burning out upon the Diſſenters in general, and the *Calviniſts* in particular; as if his old hatred and malice having been working and rolling within him ever ſince his firſt attack upon Mr. *Nichols*, had now diſcharged itſelf; tho' indeed, thanks be to God, we are favoured with ſo much knowledge as to be fully ſatisfied, that tho' *the wrath of man works not the righteouſneſs of God*, *Jam.* i. 20. yet God has declared that *the remainder* he will *reſtrain*, *Pſal.* lxxvi. 10. In this firſt page he tells us, "That "among the many artifices whereby well-meaning

octavo, preached a few years ſince at *Lime-ſtreet*, by ſeveral Diſſenting Miniſters, which ſermons the Rev. Mr. *Long* highly valued, as I am informed.

"but

" but ſimple people, are decoyed into the tents of " ſchiſm, there is none more taking with them " than the doctrine of abſolute and irreſpective de- " crees of election and reprobation. In this, " adds he, they are carefully inſtructed." What a ſcene of untruth and contradiction is wrapt up in theſe ſentiments? for can any man of ſerious thought be perſuaded that well-meaning and ſimple people can ever be won over by doctrines that ſound ſo ſhocking and terrible to them, and are repreſented in ſuch a frightful light by ſuch as our author. Nor is this all to be obſerved; for he poſitively aſſerts, that ſuch a people, as he here deſcribes, are decoyed into the tents of ſchiſm, (by which tents of ſchiſm, I ſuppoſe, I may venture to ſay he means the meeting-houſes of Diſſenters) by the doctrine of abſolute and irreſpective decrees of election and reprobation; when, alas! poor man, the greateſt part of Diſſenters, if I am capable of forming a judgment, do neither profeſs nor preach theſe doctrines; which very thing I think he is aware of, and allows in a paſſage or two dropped in his firſt treatiſe. But we will not be too hard upon him in this, becauſe it is eight years ago ſince his firſt aſſault upon Mr. *Nichols* came out, and he has doubtleſs ſlept very much ſince, and thereby might the more eaſily forget himſelf. A great deal of falſhood will alſo appear, if he will but conſider the methods made uſe of to invite, or in his own ill-natured words, to decoy well-meaning but ſimple people over to the Diſſenters: He flatly tells us, " that among the many artifices " made uſe of to this purpoſe, none are more tak- " ing with them than the doctrine of abſolute and " irreſpective decrees of election and reprobation." But give me leave to tell him, that the ſteps we generally take, in order to gain over converts from the errors of their ways, are by firſt acquainting them

them of man's apoſtacy from God, the doctrine of regeneration, in which conſiſts holineſs of heart and life; and by ſhewing them from plain texts of ſcripture, that ſalvation in all its parts ariſes from the free ſovereign good-will and grace of God, through the merit and righteouſneſs of Chriſt. I ſay, theſe heads of divinity, with earneſt invitations to come to Chriſt, as *willing and able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him*, are what the people he mentions are inſtructed in, in order to win them over from the paths of error; while the doctrines of election and reprobation are generally left for the conſideration of thoſe who have advanced farther in the ſchool of Chriſt, and can bear to be fed with meat, while theſe are ſupplied with milk, as being only babes in Chriſt, *Heb.* v. 12. And the preaching of theſe important doctrines, in which the eſſence of religion conſiſts, and which were the foundation of the reformation, has not only been inſtrumental to decoy in the unworthy language of our author, well-meaning but ſimple people into the tents of ſchiſm, or, in our own words, to convert the ſouls of men to God, by which means numbers have joined themſelves to diſſenting churches, where they are often preach'd in their purity; but before the *Bartholomew* act, they were the ſubjects of diſcourſe in the church of *England*; nor have they been entirely neglected ſince that melancholy time, to be inſiſted upon with ſucceſs, in many congregations of the church of *England*, witneſs the faithful and bleſſed miniſtry of Mr. *Long*, and the preſent labours of many of the young men, ſtil'd the *Methodiſts*, one of whom, Mr. *Whitefield* by name, I have had the honour and pleaſure to hear. May heaven ſupply all the pariſhes in *England* with men like them for a ſpirit of piety and zeal for God!

But we now ſtep forward to the next paragraph, where we find him ſaying, "that it becomes "the more agreeable to them, that is, to theſe "well-meaning ſimple people, becauſe when they "are entred into the political covenant with a "paſtor, as they call him, of their own chuſing, "whom they, without a rightly derived commiſ-"ſion, vainly believe to have a lawful appointment "to the miniſtry, they are eaſily perſuaded, that "all in covenant are of God's elected ones, who "cannot fall totally and finally from grace." Is not this genteel treatment of the Diſſenters? And is not this language vaſtly worthy of a gentleman and miniſter? As well as a dreadful lecture for well-meaning people. Poor lambs! what have they done to be left of God to this blindneſs and wickedneſs. But let us examine into what he ſo confidently aſſerts, and perhaps we ſhall find, that all is grounded upon a falſe bottom. He has a very awkward phraſe, political covenant; now what he aims at, I believe the moſt conſiderate perſon cannot determine, except he would thereby expreſs a church covenant, and then we demand of him what meaning he has couched under the word "po-"litical," and who ever before him thought of, or fixed ſuch a name upon the covenant the diſſenting churches ſtand into one another? As to this charitable ſneer at the peoples chuſing their own paſtors, I think it would have been much better if it had been ſpared, and I am apt to think, however trifling he ſpeaks of it, that it is no difficult taſk to prove from the united evidences of revelation and reaſon, that it is proper and juſtifiable for people to fix upon what miniſters they beſt approve, though indeed ſome that wear that ſacred character may eſteem it a great happineſs that they came not in by that door, but climbed up ſome other way, *Jo.* x. 1. And my own obſervations make me imagine,

that

hat many who are not diſſenters, would be very glad to uſe their power, if they might, and look upon it as nothing leſs than an impoſition that they cannot now uſe that liberty.

WHAT our author means by a rightly derived commiſſion, who can tell? except it is an uninterrupted lineal ſucceſſion of miniſters from the apoſtles, which has nothing of ſolid evidence to ſupport it: and if he means by it epiſcopal ordination, it is expected from him to give ſome reaſon for his ſentiments, and to wipe off the many objections that attend that opinion; and to conſider ſeriouſly whether our Lord's rule that he has laid down for us to judge of miniſters by, when he ſays, "*by their fruits ye ſhall know them*," *Mat.* vii. 16. regards the forms of ordination, or conſiders the doctrine they maintain, and their behaviours and converſations in the world; and whether a man that is unſound in principle, and ſcandalous in practice, has whereof to glory, though he has had all the pomp of epiſcopal ordination to conſtitute him a miniſter.

BEFORE I diſmiſs this paragraph, I would beg leave to paſs a remark upon the notorious falſhood he delivers in his aſſerting, "that they, namely, well-meaning, but ſimple people, "are eaſily "perſuaded that all in covenant, that is, the church-"covenant, are of God's elected ones." Now that this is abominably falſe, I can prove in as ſtrong and plain expreſſions as can be deſired, from the confeſſion of faith compoſed by the aſſembly of divines; for they declare, "that the pureſt churches "under heaven are ſubject both to mixture and "error." And when ſpeaking of church cenſures, they tell us, they look upon "them as neceſſary not "only for the reclaiming, and gaining of offend-"ing brethren, for deterring of others from the "like offences, but for purging out of that leaven

" which infects the whole lump; and for the vin-
" dicating the honour of Chriſt, and the holy pro-
" feſſion of the Goſpel; and for preventing the
" wrath of God, which might juſtly fall upon the
" church, if they ſhould ſuffer his covenant, and
" the ſeals thereof, to be profaned by notorious
" and obſtinate offenders." Now who could with ſuch a front, beſides Mr. *Melvil* himſelf, impoſe ſuch a deteſted falſhood upon the world for truth, as contrary as poſſible to all the principles and confeſſions of the Calviniſts? And if Mr. *Melvil* lays this ſeriouſly to heart, he will no longer wonder that ſome leave him, and attend at other places of worſhip; and that when once they are broke off from him, they are not to be recalled and regain'd; for I will venture to ſay, that if the moſt rigid enemy to Calviniſm was with all bitterneſs of ſpirit to attend upon the miniſtry of the Calviniſts for ſeven years together, he would not hear all the time ſuch an unpardonable falſhood drop from any of their mouths, as that which Mr. *Melvil* boldly utters in the firſt page of his ſecond pamphlet: A true ſample of what follows after!

I SHALL conclude my thoughts on this page, with acquainting our adverſary, that has thus falſely accuſed us, that though he may think it beneath the fancy'd dignity of his perſon and character to beg publick pardon for ſo unparallel'd a falſhood, yet that day, that important day, is approaching, as faſt as time can bring it, when we muſt all ſtand at the tribunal of that God, who pierces into, and judges the ſecrets of all hearts, and there we ſhall ſee that it is not him that commendeth himſelf, but him whom God commends, that will meet with eternal happineſs, 2 *Cor.* x. 18. And let Mr. *Melvil* and others be cautioned not to ſcandalize any miniſters if they make uſe of their beſt endeavours to preſerve the ſouls entruſted to

their

their care ſound in the faith, as well as regular and conſcientious in their lives; for they, and they only, may with truth on a dying bed ſay with the apoſtle, *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs; which the Lord, the righteous judge, ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

In the next page, we find him exactly in the ſame ſtrain of rant and falſhood; for here he treats the doctrine of predeſtination, as he does in ſeveral other pages, in the moſt opprobrious manner. Not being contented to repreſent it as a monſtrous abſurdity, but likewiſe to make it the more terrible bugbear, he ſets it forth as a notion full of folly and blaſphemy; tenets of which nature I will venture to ſay the ſincere Calviniſts, as much deteſt as any other ſet of men upon the face of the earth. And tho' theſe hard ſayings of Mr. *Melvil* may paſs for real truth, with many of his unchriſtian temper; yet I would entertain a charitable opinion of others, that are in heart no friends to predeſtination, and believe that they would readily own that Mr. *M.* has not acted agreeable to the characters of a miniſter, gentleman, or chriſtian. But however that be, we are certain, that the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand, notwithſtanding the many evil devices and contrivances of the hearts of men; and that there are ſtill remaining a diſcerning few, who will not be turned aſide into error by bare aſſertion and ſophiſtry, but diſcover the moſt cordial eſteem for truth, let men of corrupt minds try their united endeavours againſt it; and ſome of this ſacred number are to be met with not only amongſt the Diſſenters, but even amongſt the members of the eſtabliſhed church, to its great honour and reputation. I ſhould indeed have thought our author would

have

have delivered himſelf on this point in a more cautious manner; ſeeing not only our firſt reformers, and the immortal king WILLIAM maintained predeſtination, but the † ſeventeenth article of the church of *England* is directly oppoſite to what our author aſſerts. I will not urge the current of the ſcriptures againſt him, becauſe he ſeems to pay very little regard to what they ſay on this important head.

I PRODUCE theſe things, that none might lie under a miſtake by this man's noiſe, and imagine this important truth is what is only held by a few giddy fools, that without any ſhew of reaſon have broke off from the eſtabliſhed church. And ſeeing it is thus, I cannot imagine how this man with any truth can ſay with the apoſtle *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* ii. 17. "*we are not as many which corrupt the word* "*of God*, (or as it is in the margin *deal deceitfully* "*with it*) *but as of ſincerity, but as of God, in the* "*ſight of God, ſpeak we in Chriſt.* Or join with him in another paſſage, 2 *Cor.* iv. 2. "*but we* "*have renounced the hidden things of diſhoneſty; not* "*walking in craftineſs, nor handling the word of God* "*deceitfully; but by manifeſtation of the truth, commend-* "*ing ourſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of* "*God.*" I ſay, I cannot imagine how this man can go along with the apoſtles in repeating theſe paſſages after him, ſeeing he cannot clear himſelf of the guilt of a falſe oath; for if this ſeventeenth article is not quite contrary to our author's ſentiments, I believe no impartial reader can tell what it

† The article runs thus, "predeſtination to life is the ever-" laſting purpoſe of God, (whereby before the foundations of the " world were laid) he hath conſtantly decreed by his counſel " ſecret to us, to deliver from curſe and damnation thoſe whom " he hath choſen in Chriſt out of mankind, and to bring " them by Chriſt to everlaſting ſalvation, as veſſels made to " honour."

it means. And however ſome may endeavour to pervert the genuine natural ſenſe of the article, I will venture to affirm, that real piety was never more viſible in the church of *England*, than when this article was taken and maintained in its free natural meaning; and it has been by reaſon of ſuch vile preverſions, and the ſtrange fire that ſuch clergymen as Mr. *M.* abound with, that a pious religious ſoul, with a great deal of reluctance, has left the eſtabliſhed church, and united with the diſſenters; the violence and inſincerity of the clergy having been a more effectual means to increaſe the diſſenting intereſt, than the vigilance of the moſt able miniſters among us. For my part, I freely confeſs, that though I was baptized and trained up in the church of *England*; yet when I ſhook myſelf out of an implicit faith to what was there preached, and began to judge of matters for myſelf, this (namely, the violence and inſincerity of the clergy) was a prevailing reaſon with me to withdraw myſelf peaceably and conſcientiouſly from them. But tho' I am now united to a different body of people, yet it is matter of my prayer, that that church may flouriſh in the purity of its miniſters and members as much as ever; and I hope I may with truth affirm, that I bear a ſincere hearty affection to the ſound and godly part of that communion, and abhor the contrary ſpirit in Diſſenters wherever I find it. And I heartily requeſt it of my great maſter, that both we of the Diſſenters, and they of the church of *England*, that maintain this doctrine of predeſtination, may ſo walk, as it may not be blaſphemed by the oppoſers of it; yea, may commend it to ſuch as at preſent violently hate it, by the gracious effects it produces, namely, humbling our ſpirits, filling our hearts with joy, and making our converſations and behaviours more holy and blameleſs. And then we may challenge

lenge the *Arminians* to manifeſt the truth and ſincerity of faith by a more well ordered life, if they are able, and may refer ourſelves to the conſciences of our neighbours and acquaintance, whether we do not behave ourſelves in as holy a manner, and are as ſtrict obſervers of a regular practice, as thoſe who have ſet ſuch a high value upon their works, and have almoſt compelled us to glory of ourſelves, tho' we dare not glory before God, 2 *Cor.* xii. 11. If things are in this happy manner with us, we may with confidence declare, that after the *way that ſome call hereſy, we worſhip God, believing all things written in the law and prophets, Acts* xxiv. 14; and may with a chearfulneſs of temper ſuffer reproach and ſhame, having within ourſelves the moſt certain ſubſtantial evidences that we are not of that number that are appointed to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that we are the veſſels of mercy that God has prepared unto glory. And this being the diſpoſition of our ſouls, we may leave thoſe who dare reply againſt god's ſovereignty till that great avenging day ſhall appear, when the Almighty ſhall "*execute judgment on all, and convince all that* "*are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds* "*which they have ungodly committed, and of all their* "*hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt* "*him*; *Jud.* 15."

I SHALL let this page paſs without any farther obſervations upon it, and ſubjoin the relation of a true ſtory that may not perhaps be improperly added: The matter is this, I accidentally met with a ſerious aged gentleman of the eſtabliſhed church about fourteen years ago in the city of *London*; and though we were intirely ſtrangers to each other, the worthy gentleman, without any thing intimated of that nature on my ſide, complained in a ſolemn

and

and affecting manner of the clergy of his church, and particularly inſtanced the ſad degeneracy into which they were ſunk by their openly denying, or not being ready to preach up, the doctrine of predeſtination. I muſt acknowledge that what he ſaid very much ſurprized me; and becauſe I found him a zealot for the church, I was not forward to enter into a cloſe converſation with him about theſe matters, becauſe I look'd upon it not only as a very improper time and place to treat of them, but was likewiſe timorous leſt I ſhould unwarily drop any thing that might ſeem to be affronting. But ſo earneſt was the good man to unboſom himſelf, that he expreſſed himſelf if not in theſe words, yet to this ſenſe: "The church has fallen off from the faith of the "reformers; and I cannot but imagine that many "of our clergy, eſpecially thoſe of the younger "ſort, are guilty of ſubſcribing either what they "know not, or what is worſe, thoſe very things "that are contrary to their own ſentiments." Upon this I aſked him if he knew none amongſt the aforementioned gentlemen that preached up this doctrine. With a ſeeming pleaſure he pointed out one or more amongſt them that did. After he had ſaid this, I enquired of him whether he knew ſuch and ſuch perſons, mentioning the miniſters of the higheſt note amongſt the Diſſenters. He told me that he did not know any one of them. Seeing this poor gentleman in this condition, I apprehended it my duty to acquaint him where, in the city, this important doctrine was preached; and particularly I directed him to the merchants lecture on *Tueſdays* at *Pinners-hall*. Thus with a little more converſation we parted in mutual love and friendſhip; and I do not know that I have ever ſeen him ſince.

THIS will be ſufficient to ſhew, that others beſides myſelf have been troubled at theſe woeful neglects

in the church of *Engiand.* And if the clergy would not have the Diſſenters increaſe, and the holieſt and moſt thoughtful of their hearers turn to them, I would adviſe them inſtead of *Arminian* fury, not only to have more regard to their converſation and behaviour, than what many of them exerciſe at preſent, but I would likewiſe preſs them to preach up the doctrines of their articles and the reformation, which ſacred truths have been ſealed with the blood of martyrs, and which are ſtrongly recommended in ſcripture; for there are many that are endowed with ſuch wiſdom, that they will prefer truth, though under the greateſt diſadvantages, to the perſons or noiſe of men. Would to God that all who wear the badge of chriſtianity, would thus *prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good,* 1 *Theſ.* v. 21. Amen and Amen.

In the fourth page, we find Mr. *M.* delivering himſelf thus; "The words purely by grace, do undoubtedly exclude Jeſus Chriſt." But who ever thought or meant any ſuch thing among the Calviniſts? Their ſenſe of purely by grace, is that the grace of God is put in oppoſition to works done on our part; which works are not meritorious or foreſeen by God as the cauſe of it. If Mr. *M.* denies this ſenſe to be true, there are many texts that will ſufficiently prove it, *Rom.* ix. 11. "*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works but of him that calleth.*" And in another place the great apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* xi. 5, 6. "*Even ſo then at this preſent time alſo there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwiſe grace is no grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwiſe work is no more work.*" *

In

* If theſe texts are not ſufficient for the purpoſe Mr. *M.* may turn to *Eph.* ii. 8. 9. 2 *Tim.* i. 9. *Tit.* iii. 5. *Rom.* iv. 4.

In the thirteenth page he tells us, that "the "redemption by Chriſt extends to all mankind, "and that he did not die for one part more than "another." For my part I heartily wiſh for the ſatisfaction of his readers he had expounded to us, in a conſiſtency with his notions, theſe following paſſages of holy writ, "*I lay down my life for the "ſheep, John* x. 15." "*Take heed therefore unto "yourſelves, and to all the flock, over which the holy "Ghoſt has made you overſeers, to feed the church of "God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood, "Acts* xx. 28." "*I pray for them, I pray not for "the world; but for them which thou haſt given me; "for they are thine, John* xvii. 9.

We paſs on to page 20, in which our author, in his pert air of aſſurance ſays, that "the ninth "of *Romans* does not at all relate to any imaginary "predeſtination of particular perſons to eternal "happineſs or miſery;" and, "that the deſign "of it is only to declare the ſovereign power and "the juſtice of God in diſtributing to different "nations in divers ages, what different advantages "he pleaſes." But pray Mr. *M.* let us put the queſtion to you, and enquire how it comes to paſs that God may be allowed to act in a ſovereign way in ſome, and cannot in other caſes. Why may God diſpenſe temporal bleſſings as he pleaſes, and be allowed to manage with juſtice to his creatures at the ſame time; and yet muſt be charged as an unjuſt being if he gives diſtinguiſhing, ſpiritual, and eternal favours the ſame way. And as to that † ſcripture in the xith of *Romans*, which you have urged in favour of what you aſſert, you have brought it in very unluckily, for it is neither in connection with the ixth chapter, nor will it anſwer the purpoſe for which you urge it; for you bring it to prove,

 that

† The text is this, "*For if God ſpared not the natural branches, "take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee,*" *Rom.* xi. 21.

that if ſuch as are at preſent veſſels of mercy do not beware, or walk worthily, they may be loſt or eternally periſh, which you ſeem to infer from that ſentence of God, not ſparing them; whereas, if the truth is ſearched into, it is plain that *Romans* ix. 23, 24, and *Romans* xi. 21. ſpeak of things very different. The firſt aſſures us of the certainty of the ſalvation of all ſuch as by effectual calling have the evidences of their being amongſt the number of thoſe that are elected and prepared for glory; *Rom.* viii. 29, 30, 31. though we freely acknowledge at the ſame time, that it is the duty of all that are of this happy number, to work out their own ſalvation with fear and trembling, and that it is God that works in them both to will and to do the duties enjoined them. Whereas in the latter place (the eleventh of *Romans*) the apoſtle gives us an account of the judgments God permitted to fall on the *Jews* by reaſon of their unbelief: A juſt and terrible warning not only to a ſingle member of the *Gentile* church, but alſo to the whole body in general, to take heed they do not fail of the grace of God they have made a profeſſion of, and thereby grow proud and carnally ſecure, and be as the *Jews* were, left to ſink into that heinous ſin of unbelief. And from this awful inſtance of divine vengeance the apoſtle takes an opportunity to incite the *Gentile* world to humility, thankfulneſs and piety, leſt they ſhould have the candleſtick removed from its place, and have all their church privileges taken from them. This ſeems to me to be the plain meaning of the eleventh of *Romans*; and not as our author would have us believe, that God ever caſt off his choſen people, ſuch as he had elected to eternal life, and would ſuffer them to fall away totally and finally. For had this been the ſenſe of the apoſtle, he would certainly oppoſed thoſe ſentences he gives us in the beginning of the

chapter;

chapter; *God hath not caſt away his people which he foreknew*; *Ver.* 2. *Even ſo then at this preſent time a remnant according to the election of grace*, *v.* 5. Iſrael *had not obtained that which he ſeeketh for, but the election hath obtained, and the reſt were blinded*, *v.* 7.

But we proceed to the 23d page, and ſurely it is moſt ſhocking to a pious reader to ſee with what daring irreverend liberty this man treats the oracles of truth, in order to compel them to ſpeak with a harmony to his darling hypotheſis, not only with regard to general redemption, but alſo to conditional election; for in this page he tortures that text where it is ſaid, 2 *Tim.* i. 9. "*Who*, that "is, God, *hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy* "*calling*; *not according to our works, but according* "*to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given* "*us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began.*" I ſay, he tortures this text in ſaying that no more is implyed by the ſentence, *he hath ſaved us*, than the purpoſe and intention of God concerning ſalvation: for if this is true, by the ſame method of argument he may pronounce that the holy calling not according to the works either of *Paul* or *Timothy* was only God's purpoſe to do it; whereas we have undoubted evidence that at the time the apoſtle wrote this epiſtle, God had actually called both him and his ſon *Timothy* to whom he wrote, and thus they were in part ſaved already, and had the moſt ſolid grounds of aſſurance, that the faithfulneſs of the promiſes of a God who cannot lie would take care that the important work ſhould be compleated, and that he who had opened the eye-lids of the morning, would brighten it up to a perfect day.

In the following page he perverts the ſenſe of that paſſage of the great apoſtle to *Titus*, "*Not by* "*works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but ac-*

"*cording*

" *cording to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of re-*
" *generation, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* *Tit.* iii. 5.
" Here, ſays Mr. *M.* God is ſaid to have ſaved
" thoſe who were not actually ſaved, but only un-
" der his purpoſe of ſaving them, if they obey
" the Goſpel, and perſevere unto the end." But theſe words, as to the greateſt part which make up his expoſition, are not to be met with in the text, any more than the words *ſovereign* and *fixed* which he dwells ſo long upon are to be found in *Eph.* i. 4. And his notion of the contents of this text had been much better huſhed in the grave of oblivion, than to lie ſo long and openly offending the pious part of mankind, and bringing ſuch a diſgrace upon himſelf; for ſurely none that have ever experienced the ſavour of Chriſt's good ointments, can be any way delighted with ſuch filth and ſtench * as is wrapt up in theſe perverſions of ſcripture. But I will not purſue his method of bare aſſerting, but go a ſtep farther, and prove his comment entirely falſe; for will he dare to ſay that the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, which paſſed upon thoſe true converts thro' Chriſt, was only God's purpoſe and intention to do it? When any one actually beſtows a kindneſs, it is certainly no longer in his deſign; yet this is Mr. *M.* method of interpretation; how falſe and ridiculous it is, I leave the honeſt mind to judge.

In the next page we have a moſt uncommon turn on thoſe words, " *Neverthelefs the foundation of*
" *God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knows*
" *them that are his*; 2 *Tim.* ii. 19. " This text, ſays he,
" does not relate to any ſecret foundation union, but
" to the fundamental doctrine of the reſurrection to
" eternal

* I here have imitated ſome of the unworthy language he gives Mr. *N.* whether it is in this place juſt, the reader may eaſily determine.

" eternal life." This expoſition I imagine he grounds upon the apoſtle's ſpeaking of the reſurrection in the 18th verſe. But let me aſk the man in what ſenſe this doctrine of the reſurrection as a foundation, has *this ſeal, the Lord knows them that are his*? The foundation there ſpoke of, as I take it, is the ſecurity of thoſe that are veſſels of gold and ſilver, while the want of this to ſupport them is the reaſon of the veſſels of wood and ſtone falling and breaking, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* did. And can the reſurrection have any thing of an influence on this? Beſides, if we take the paſſage in our ſenſe, their will be a great many ſcriptures to correſpond with it, and it will ſeem eaſy and plain; while I think the impartial reader will quickly determine that what our author ſays on this paſſage is forced and unnatural. But we will not waſte any more thoughts on this interpretation; for ſhould we once pretend to ſcan all the errors of his pamphlet, we ſhould have an endleſs fruitleſs labour; and therefore we paſs over what lies between, to examine into the 27th and 28th pages of his book, where we find Mr. *M.* ſaying, " That the grace " Mr. *Nichols* calls ſovereign grace, is that grace " that operates without man's free-will." I am very much at a loſs to know how Mr. *M.* can dive into the ſecrets of his neighbour's heart, and determine what his thoughts are. I am fully perſuaded that if Mr. *Nichols* was to have given his own ſenſe of his own words, he would not ſay any ſuch thing. We of the *Calviniſtical* ſentiments freely grant that by nature, all of us, not excluding our adverſary, have no byaſs of mind, no freedom of will for any thing that is truly good; nay, we may ſpend our days without any regard to it, nor can we poſſibly enjoy ſuch mercy till it operates in us, *Jo.* i. 12, 13. But then we firmly believe without any inconſiſtency with what we have premiſed, that ſovereign grace works upon our wills, ſo as to make them free and ready to perform

perform that which is good; and that when perſons have felt the power of his grace upon their hearts, they are made to will, and to do according to God's good pleaſure; *Phil.* ii. 13. and that they then yield theirſelves ſoul and body to his ſervice.

We proceed to page 31. in which our author falls foul on the aſſemblies confeſſion, becauſe of the falſhood he imagines there is contained in it, becauſe it is there ſaid, that believers are ſecur'd from falling away totally and finally from the eſtate of grace; which with a great deal of warmth, continues he, is in direct oppoſition to *Heb.* vi. 5, 6. For this I think he has abundant reaſon to take ſhame to himſelf; ſeeing this truth is ſo frequently aſſerted in the ſacred volumes, that he that runs may read. Chriſt tells, *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; neither ſhall any man pluck them out of my hand*, *Joh.* x. 27, 28. And the apoſtle expreſsly ſpeaks thus to the *Philippians*, *I am confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jeſus Chriſt*, *Phil.* i. 6. And his alledging, *Heb.* vi. 5, 6. † in the favour of his ſentiments, is taking an interpretation for granted, which we can by no means allow of. For we do not grant him that thoſe were God's people, and true believers, the apoſtle there ſpeaks of, or were of that happy number that enjoyed the things which accompany ſalvation; though indeed they might be furniſhed with far larger gifts than what Mr. *M.* could ever put in a claim to.

But to go on, in page 32. he tells us "he can-"not help thinking that Mr. *N.* ſometimes meets "with ſtrong gripes of conſcience; that he is fight-"ing againſt the truth, tho' he cannot receive it "in

† The words are theſe "for it is impoſſible for thoſe who "were once enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, "and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, &c."

" in the love of it." But what is become of Mr. *M's* charity? and who conſtituted him a judge of mens hearts? On which account it would be well in him to conſider what we meet with in the ſcriptures, *Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged; and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again. And why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but conſidereſt not the beam that is in thine own eye? Mat.* vii. 1, 2, 3. And if another perſon ſhould perſuade himſelf that Mr. *M.* loves darkneſs rather than light, or that he miſtakes the one for the other, I hope he will not venture to charge him with a want of charity; and I fancy he will ſcarcely find any thing to help him and ſupport him in ſuch a condition.

In the next page he tells us " that 2 *Pet.* iii. 9. " (in which it is ſaid, that God is not willing that " any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to " repentance,) is a text that will both gripe and " ſtand its ground againſt all the ſhifts and evaſions " of rigid Predeſtinarians." But in anſwer to this idle flouriſh, I cannot but think unleſs his conſtitution be uncommonly ſtrong, it will gripe, to uſe his own darling word, this man, if he attempts to prove in a conſiſtency with his own ſentiments, how it comes to paſs that ſuch numbers are eternally loſt, if the will of God is not concerned in it; or how it is poſſible that any ſhould periſh contrary to the will of him that is able to ſave to the uttermoſt. This is treating our author in his own way, and a pulling down his unſcriptural imaginations with his own weapons.

He ſeems to be ſadly drove to his ſhifts in the ſame page; for he adds upon his ſaying " that " God is not willing that any one of the whole race " of man ſhould periſh, "eſpecially" thoſe to whom " the preaching of the Goſpel is vouchſafed."

Which guard ſeems to intimate that he had ſpoke more than he cared to ſtand by, or could maintain with a ſhadow of argument. As to his ſaying "that "if there was ſuch an election as Mr. *N.* contends "for, it had not been ſo neceſſary for the elect "to be redeemed by Chriſt their head, ſeeing they "whoſe ſalvation depended upon an abſolute de-"cree, ſtood in no need of a Goſpel grant of par-"don;" he really ſays, that which the Calviniſts diſallow of; and he ſeems to think he has an unconteſted licence to ſay what he pleaſes. The Calviniſts never diſjoined the means from the end, and they always allow that one is ordained as well as the other; agreeable to what the great apoſtle ſays, *but we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the ſpirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our Goſpel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 13, 14.

In the 34th page he inſinuates that Mr. *N.* was neither a good chriſtian nor an honeſt man; but he ſeems to be moſt offended with him becauſe of his acting as if he was in ſport: in which grave remarks our author very ſuddenly ſets himſelf up rather for a commanding and lordly ſcribler, than a cautious wary writer, becauſe he reproves one ~~their~~ more advanced in years than himſelf, for that very fault which he is ſometimes moſt notoriouſly guilty of, verifying the words of the wiſeſt of men, *As a madman who caſteth firebrands, arrows, and death; ſo is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and ſaith, am not I in ſport? Pro.* xxvi. 18, 19.

In the 35th page he would make us think he was very warm for good works; but I hope he will remember, that the perſons who are the moſt ſhining ornaments of chriſtianity, are not thoſe that boaſt moſt of their value for good works, but thoſe that

that are moſt careful to perform them. Thoſe of this happy number, are ſo humble as to acknowledge they are but unprofitable ſervants, and ſo conſcious of their own deficiencies, as to ſay, even when Chriſt their judge ſhall ſpeak in the higheſt commendation of them, Lord, when was it we did thoſe worthy ſervices for thee? And let not my author be angry if I tell him, that the Calviniſts do as much prove the ſincerity of their faith by their holy well-ordered lives, as any ſet of men that aſſume the name of chriſtians; and contend as much for good-works in their proper places. Nor do they merit the diſgraceful name of Antinomians ſo much as many others who are free in fixing that opprobrious character upon them. Nor is this the bare aſſertion of the Calviniſts, but the teſtimony of their enemies will witneſs it: and it is my fervent prayer, that Mr. *M.* may with ſtronger evidence prove himſelf a more ſincere chriſtian than the Calviniſts. I ſay theſe things without an empty ſneer, for which he upbraids Mr. *N.* in the moſt indecent manner.

In the next page he tells us his ſentiments plainly about juſtification, and ſays that "it is not by "the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, but that "our faith is imputed to us for the righteouſneſs "of Chriſt." Such ſenſeleſs jargon this is, that it ſcarce can be ever equalled. To ſay that our faith is imputed to us for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is ſo confounding and puzzling, that ſurely no reader can have a clear and diſtinct idea of it. Had he ſaid, that the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is imputed to us for or upon the account of our faith, or that our act of faith in Chriſt, or his righteouſneſs, was our juſtifying righteouſneſs, it would have conveyed ſomething of a clear idea, and would have ſounded much better in the ears of the reader. Though indeed theſe ſentiments are directly contrary to the

oracles of truth; for they acquaint us that when believers are ſaid to be juſtified by faith, it is in oppoſition to merit and deſert of our works, as the ſcripture ſays, *Rom.* iii. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* And they tell us we are juſtified by faith, as it receives the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as the apoſtle acquaints us, *Rom.* v. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* For it is Chriſt's righteouſneſs in which we are juſtified before God; *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*, *Rom.* x. 4. On which account the Saviour is acknowledged by all true believers, as *the Lord* their *righteouſneſs*, *Jer.* xxiii. 6. and by grace *this righteouſneſs of Chriſt is on and upon all that believe*, *Rom.* iii. 26. This, and not the act of faith itſelf, is the beſt robe; and in this the apoſtle deſired to be found excluſive of his own; for he calls it not the righteouſneſs for faith, as our author talks, or would expreſs himſelf, but *that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith*, *Phil.* iii. 9. So much in anſwer to this unſcriptural ſtuff.

Let us now turn over to the next ſide, and here we may ſee that he is as free in diſparaging the work of the Spirit, as he has been in his laſt page, trifling with the righteouſneſs of a redeemer; for he affirms very roundly, that true ſanctification by an irreſiſtable work of the Holy Spirit is no ſcripture-doctrine. How he can maintain his aſſertion I cannot tell, ſeeing the ſcripture ſpeaks in ſuch direct oppoſition to it, where it ſays, *the wind bloweth, where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit*, *Joh.* iii. 8. and that *the world cannot receive the ſpirit, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him*, *Joh.* xiv. 17. and

that

that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God, neither can he, becauſe they are fooliſhneſs to him, and are ſpiritually diſcerned*; 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. From theſe and various texts, which aſſure us of the ſpirit's working in what manner, at what times, and on what objects he pleaſes, both as a ſanctifier and a comforter, I cannot but imagine that there is great reaſon for our author to bluſh, and be aſhamed, and to learn to ſettle a guard upon his mouth when he is ſpeaking concerning the Holy Ghoſt. As to what he ſays, in the ſame ſide, " that there are no " promiſes of abſolute ſecurity, from whence a cer- " tainty of perſeverance may be concluded, or that " an abſolute aſſurance that we ſhall be ſaved, is ob- " tainable by us while we are upon the trial of our " faith and obedience." I anſwer, that his opinion of this matter is only a ſurmiſe of his, who, as he is a ſtranger to the bitterneſs ſome others have felt, ſo he is not a ſharer with them in their joy. And before he had ventured, as I think, to deliver himſelf with ſo much poſitiveneſs on this head, I think he ought to have weighed ſeriouſly ſuch paſſages of ſacred writ as theſe following; *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*, *Heb.* xiii. 5. *None ſhall be able to pluck them out of my hands*; *Joh.* x. 29. *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; 2 *Pet.* i. 10. *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heaven*; 2 *Cor.* v. 1. *Beloved, now are we the ſons of God, and it does not yet appear what we ſhall be*; *but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him*; *for we ſhall ſee him as he is*; *Joh.* iii. 2. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Rom.* viii. 35. *For me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain*; *Phil.* i. 21. I ſay, Mr. *M.* ought to have removed theſe texts out of his way, before he had ventured on ſuch an aſſertion

as

as this; for ſurely nothing ſeems to maintain the contrary ſentiment with greater ſtrength, and evidence than what we meet with here.

But while I would check this author from abſolutely denying this important truth, I would put in a caution to many vain talkers about an aſſurance of eternal ſalvation, and deſire them to ſearch well into the grounds of their confidence; leſt building upon a ſandy bottom, they ſhould bring ſcandal and diſhonour upon the good ways of God here, and fail of eternal happineſs hereafter. And let them take care of venturing into ſuch lengths, as to ſlight or perhaps condemn thoſe that own they have not attained to ſuch a great meaſure of faith: for ſcripture, I think, will be on our ſide, if we ſay, that many a ſincere chriſtian never can riſe any higher than to a faith of reliance, and his ſins may ſo ſully over his evidences for heaven that he may ſcarce determine whether they are ſo or not; and the ſpirit of God may be ſo grieved with his frequent tranſgreſſions, as to withdraw his comforting influences from him. For indeed the faith of aſſurance is ouly to be met with by a cloſe ſtrict walking with God †. O that all thoſe that put in a claim to the inheritance of this favour of aſſurance, would by their pious converſation teſtify the truth of what they profeſs!

In page 38, Mr. *M.* ſeems to ſpeak very meanly of the faith of God's elect, as it applies the merits of Chriſt to ourſelves, in caſting ourſelves upon the merits of Chriſt, and reſting upon, and laying hold of him for ſalvation, "as if this, continues our author, could avail us any thing without "a conſtant univerſal obedience to the commands "laid upon us in the Goſpel." But alas, poor man, he makes a plain diſcovery that he is deſtitute of the

† 2 *Pet.* i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

the faith he contends for, ſeeing he is ſo far from paying a conſtant univerſal obedience, that the laws of love and truth are broken by him, and he has been guilty of falſely accuſing his neighbours; for we will readily acknowledge, that this faith is a holy one, and purifies the heart; and though the ſoul, ſenſible of its weakneſs, ſin, and miſery, lays itſelf down at Chriſt's feet, and truſts his ſalvation only upon his merits, yet the ſoul willingly takes Chriſt's yoke upon him, and derives ſtrength from him to live to his Glory, though at the very ſame time it knows that without Chriſt it can do nothing, and that if Chriſt will not ſave it muſt periſh, *Mat.* xi. 29. And this Mr. *M.* however miſrepreſented, is what the Calviniſts maintain, and contend for.

But to go on to the 39th page, where we find him calling (what Mr. *N.* ſaith, about the Spirit's new creation-work, in which the poor ſoul finds no ſtrength at all for to work or perform law conditions for life) "ſtrange jargon, fitted to enveigle "ſilly and unwary people;" but all this may be turned back upon Mr. *M*'s. ſelf, for we can prove that Mr. *M.* talks very weakly and fooliſhly, which I am very certain will be ſwallowed down by none for belief, except weak heads, and dark hearts; for does not the word of God declare quite contrary to Mr. *M*'s. ſentiments, that we are without ſtrength by nature, yea dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, *Eph.* ii. 1. that without Chriſt we can do nothing, *Joh.* xv. 5. and that the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, that it is not ſubject to his law, neither indeed can be, *Rom.* viii. 7. under ſuch undeniable evidences of our not being able to raiſe ourſelves from the ruins of the fall, I am afraid our author is like the perſons deſcribed in the *Revelations*, imagining himſelf very rich and increaſed with goods, and having need of nothing, and knowing not that he is wretched, and miſerable,

and

and poor, and blind, and naked, *Rev.* ii. 17. and that Mr. *M.* cannot unite with the moſt holy of the apoſtles in ſaying; I know that in me, that is in my fleſh dwelleth no good thing: for to will is preſent with we, but how to perform that which is good I know not, *Rom.* vii. 18. But we paſs on to the bottom of this, and part of the next page, where Mr. *M.* very weakly, or worſe, charges Mr. *N.* and his followers, with taking the word *created* in a literal ſenſe, and believing that there is a new being properly created in man, at his paſſing under the ſecond birth: this I cannot but think is entirely owing to Mr. *M*'s. ignorance, or his inveteracy; for Mr. *N.* I am perſuaded neither writes nor thought any ſuch thing, though we own that the power, greatneſs, and glory of this work is more largely diſplayed, and is ſet forth in ſtronger figures than what Mr. *M.* allows; and when it is deſcribed as a new creation we cannot but think it plainly intimates to us the exceeding greatneſs of God's power in working ſuch a great change; and ſo when it is ſpoken of as a reſurrection, it carries along with it an intimation that there is an equal diſplay of almighty power in raiſing us from our death in treſpaſſes and ſins, as there is in giving life to thoſe who are really naturally dead; and we believe that as a perſon cannot perform the acts of a living man, when he is naturally dead, ſo a perſon cannot move one ſtep heaven-ward while he is in a ſtate of unregeneracy: though at the ſame time we firmly believe that the perſon converted, is really the ſelf-ſame body and ſoul, with ſame individual members and faculties there were before.

I CANNOT leave the 41ſt page, before I paſs a remark upon Mr. *M*'s ſaying, that Mr. *N.* "thought "fit to drop good works," in which he ſeems to inſinuate that Mr. *N.* has a mean opinion, if any, of good

good works, or that Mr. *N.* would have us believe that men may be new creatures without them. But I hope this book will not fall into the hands of any that are ſo groſly ignorant as to allow what Mr. *M.* intimates on this point to be true; for I think none had any reaſon to entertain ſuch a ſentiment concerning Mr. *N.* while ſuch texts as theſe have a place in ſcripture: *Foraſmuch as ye are manifeſtly declared to be the epiſtle of Chriſt, miniſtered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of ſtone, but in fleſhy tables of the heart*; 2 *Cor.* iii. 3. *For this is the covenant that I will make with the houſe of* Iſrael, *after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be my people, Jer.* xxxi. 33. Though I would not have Mr. *M.* miſtake the matter, and think that God effects this gracious change on any for their works ſake. As to what he ſays concerning Mr. *N*'s expreſſions on the ſoul's venturing on Chriſt, as he died for the ungodly, and his charitable ſneer, that a little proving of it to be right believing, would have done no harm; let me reply, that as it is not the moſt ſolid proof of the weighty and important truths of the bible that will enlighten the underſtandings of ſome men, ſo a word of this nature to ſome pious minds, will ſink with ſufficient evidence. And the reaſon is plain, becauſe theſe laſt have a knowledge and feeling ſenſe of their ſin and miſery by nature, agreeable to what we meet with in the evangeliſt *Matthew*; *But when Jeſus heard that, he ſaid unto them, they that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick: but go ye and learn what that means, I will have mercy and not ſacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*; *Mat.* ix. 12, 13.

In page 43, Mr. *M.* talks as if the Spirit was not given to work faith; by which daring thought he declares himſelf to be a very great ſtranger to the faith of the operation of God, the power of the Holy Ghoſt, and his ſacred work upon the ſoul, which ſtate is really *moſt dreadful if we conſider it only as the ſtate of a private man. But how far more terrible is it for one that has aſſumed the character of a miniſter, to be in ſuch a condition. We are ſenſible, as well as Mr. *M.* that the Holy Ghoſt doth not now reveal the doctrines of the Gospel by immediate inſpiration, (which falſe gloſs he would fain fix on Mr. *N*'s ſaying that the Spirit opens a door of faith) but yet we think that the darkneſs of our minds by nature is ſo great, that men are not able to receive to ſaving purpoſes, many of the important truths of revelation, without having the Holy Spirit firſt to inſtruct them, who guides into all truth; *Joh.* xvi. 13. for we cannot perſuade ourſelves that an hiſtorical knowledge of the bible, or a notional faith, will carry a perſon to heaven, without having felt the power of ſaving faith. For if this were our ſentiment, thoſe perſons the apoſtle mentions in *Hebrews* would have been in a ſafe condition, "For it is impoſſible for thoſe "who were once enlightned, and have taſted of "the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of "the Holy Ghoſt, &c. *Heb.* vi. 4, 5, 6."

In the 51ſt page, he boldly aſſerts that Chriſt died for all men, as well the damned, as thoſe that are ſaved. But, Mr. *M.* let me put this queſtion to you, and let me have a ſerious anſwer to it: if what you here lay down be really true, if Chriſt paid an equal price for thoſe that are eternally loſt, as he did for thoſe that ſhall be advanced to eternal happineſs, how comes it about that all mankind

* Rom. viii. 9. *Now if any man have not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.*

kind are not ſaved? If I pay a price for the releaſe of fifty ſlaves in *Turkey*, and but ten of them are ſet at liberty, is not the money I laid down for the other forty ſquandred away? Beſides, if Chriſt died for all men, as well the damned as thoſe that are ſaved, how comes it about that Chriſt in his prayer in the garden confines his petitions to thoſe that the father had given him, in oppoſition to thoſe that were of the world? *Jo.* xvii. 9. *I pray for them*, ſays he, *I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine.* Upon your hypotheſis, how can it be ſaid that Chriſt ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul and be ſatisfied? *Iſa.* liii. 11. and that Chriſt laid down his life for the ſheep? *Joh.* x. 15. And the apoſtle *Paul* had but very little foundation to build his comfort upon, when he ſays, *Gal.* ii. 20. *Chriſt loved me, and gave himſelf for me*, *Joh.* xvii. 12. if ſo be ſuch a wretch as *Judas*, a ſon of perdition, might have ſaid this before his foul apoſtacy from, and affront to his Saviour, as well as the remarkably pious ſaint *Paul.*

But to proceed, Mr. *M.* ſeemeth at a loſs how to reconcile Mr. *N*'s doctrine of particular redemption to the 39th article of the church of *England*, No wonder that the worthy gentleman is at a loſs; it is a thing very frequent with him before, and I am afraid it is not the laſt time he will be at one. But however let us take a ſurvey of this article, that Mr. *N.* runs ſo counter to, and ſee whether Mr. *M*'s heavy charge of Mr. *N*'s ſubſcribing what he did not believe, is true or falſe, The article runs thus, " The offering of Chriſt " once made, is that perfect redemption, propitia- " tion, and ſatisfaction, for all the ſins of the whole " world, both original and actual; and there is " none other ſatisfaction for ſin, but that alone." I ſuppoſe that Mr. *M.* founds his heavy accuſation of Mr. *N.* upon the article's ſaying that Chriſt

made a redemption, propitiation and ſatisfaction for all the ſins of the whole world; taking it for granted, that the meaning of theſe expreſſions is, that all men are put into a ſalvable ſtate. But this is really nothing elſe but his raiſing up an image of ſtraw, beating it down, and triumphing over it: for we take, and I doubt not Mr. *N.* did ſo when he ſubſcribed, the ſenſe of the article to be the very ſame with that in 1 *John* ii. 2. *And he is the propitiation for our ſins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* The meaning of which paſſage we take to be this, that Chriſt laid down his life for the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews*; agreeable to what *Caiaphas* propheſied, *Joh.* xi. 51, 52. namely, that Jeſus ſhould die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that he ſhould gather together in one the children of God, which were ſcattered abroad. And it is plain that the words *all*, and *whole world*, with many ſuch like general expreſſions, muſt ſometimes be drawn into a very narrow meaning, or what will Mr. *M.* make of the woman of *Samaria*, *Joh.* iv. 29. ſaying, *Come, ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did*; when Chriſt had only informed her how many huſbands ſhe had had, and that her preſent huſband was not ſo? And let Mr. *M.* tell me what is the meaning of *Col.* i. 6. where it is ſaid, that the Goſpel is come into *all the world*, whereas it had ſpread itſelf but to a very inconſiderable part of the earth, if compared to the many nations that were not favoured with it? Will not Mr. *M.* allow that theſe texts are to be conſidered with ſeveral reſtrictions? I am perſuaded he muſt; and if ſo, pray let Mr. *M.* tell me the reaſon why the Calviniſts may not take the ſcriptures that ſpeak of the whole world, and all mens being ſaved, and the articles of the church of *England* that have ſuch expreſſions, with a limitation and reſtriction?

In the 52d page, we find that our author ſeems very confident that he has found a text that will with undeniable evidence prove, that thoſe for whom Chriſt died, may be loſt eternally. The text he produces is this, 1 *Cor.* viii. 11. *and through thy knowledge, ſhall thy weak brother periſh, for whom Chriſt died?* But let us conſider the paſſage cloſely, and we ſhall find all his hopes of ſupporting his ſentiments from this text are quite diſappointed: for when the apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the weak brother's periſhing for whom Chriſt died, we do not interpret it of the weak brother's being eternally loſt. It is not an actual perdition that is there deſigned by the apoſtle, as if any one would periſh for whom Chriſt laid down his life; for if that was the meaning, this text would claſh with what Chriſt ſays, *Joh.* x. 28. *And I give them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand. Joh.* xvii. 12. *Thoſe that thou gaveſt me, I have kept; and not one of them is loſt.* But we muſt underſtand the word *periſh* here of an occaſional perdition: we wound, our brother's conſcience by our unguarded liberty in eating thoſe things that in themſelves are indifferent, and thereby do as much as in us lies, expoſe him to the danger of being loſt eternally, tho' in reality he ſhall never fail of everlaſting ſalvation. This way of ſpeaking is very common in ſcripture. It is ſaid in *Mat.* v. 28. that *whoſoever looks upon a woman to luſt after her, has committed adultery with her in his heart*; that is, he is guilty of it with reſpect to himſelf. So when one is ſaid to make God a liar, it intimates that he has done all that he could do towards ſuch a thing; *Joh.* 10. v. And the apoſtle is ſaid to preach the faith he once deſtroyed; whereas it was not in his, nor the united power of earth and hell to deſtroy it; and the expreſſion means no more than this,

this, that he uſed all poſſible methods to root it out of the world. And ſo we muſt underſtand this paſſage, that a perſon who ſits at table in an idol's temple, does all that he poſſibly can, to bring about the eternal damnation of his weak brother. I might have multiplied ſolutions to the ſeeming difficulties of this text, but I think this may be ſufficient to convince the impartial reader that there is nothing in this paſſage to ſupport Mr. *M*'s ſentiments, and that what I have ſaid is enough to ſilence the mouth of that bold gain-ſayer, and oppoſer of the truth.

In the 55th page our reverend antagoniſt quotes a paſſage from an author, and that with approbation. What he ſays is this, "Our calling is of "God; but that we are elect or not, is from our "ſelves." This ſentence carries ſuch a confuſion and blaſphemy along with it, that I am poſitive all impartial readers will ſee that it is ſufficiently exploded by it ſelf, without calling in the aſſiſtance of a remark upon it.

Without taking any notice of his toſſing and tumbling things about in ſome pages that immediately follow, let us paſs a remark upon, and endeavour to check his free-will, for which he is a very ſtrenuous advocate, as we are well acquainted from the 60th page, in which he brings in an unſuſpected text, as an invincible proof of this his favourite tenet; ſuch a ſort of proof, as I believe numbers of his brethren are under vaſt obligations to him for finding out; for ſuch cunning, and wonderful ſtretch of thought never ſurely entered into an *Arminian*'s head before, and it muſt certainly be the product of his unwearied ſtudy; for we will not entertain ſo harſh a thought of the matter, as to think Mr. *M.* was aſſiſted to find out ſuch a convincing argument for free-will by the power of conjuration, for that I believe all will allow him to be unac-

unacquainted with. But I muſt not thus delay the mentioning of ſuch an argument, becauſe I believe that your expectations are by this time raiſed, and you are deſirous to hear where in all the ſacred volumes it ſhould be, and what it is, tho' perhaps when your are told it, you may as much wonder that he imagines it is ſo convincing. The text is this, *neverthelefs he that ſtandeth ſtedfaſt in his heart, having no neceſſity, but hath power over his own will, and hath ſo decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doth well*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 37. What is this to demonſtrate ſo inconteſtably the doctrine of man's free-will by nature to that which is ſpiritually good, for is this a ſpiritual action? But ſuppoſe we grant, what Mr. *M.* deſires, or elſe he quotes this paſſage to no purpoſe, that this diſpoſing of a child with relation to marriage is a ſpiritual act in a parent; yet ſtill it will be all ineffectual to build his notion of free-will upon; for the perſons to whom the apoſtle inſcribed this epiſtle were the church of God at *Corinth*, and wrote to as perſons in a ſtate of grace, and conſequently were ſuppoſed to have their wills renewed; which, if ſo, will never be able to prove, that, as we are in an unregenerate ſtate, we can perform acceptable and ſpiritual ſervice for God. How ſadly was our reverend antagoniſt drove to his ſhifts, in that he could find no plainer text to ſupport the doctrine of free-will, than what he here produces? and I cannot but think our author was fallen into a dream, or was tinctured with enthuſiaſm; for he might as well, if not to better purpoſe, have took upon him to maintain the doctrine of man's free-will from the caſe of matrimony, where two perſons unite in a freedom of will. But that we may not leave this page without offering ſome arguments to ſupport the contrary ſentiment of the Calviniſts; let me entreat the favour of Mr. *M.* to weigh ſeri-

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ouſly ſuch texts as theſe: *For they that are after the fleſh, do mind the things of the fleſh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* For *to be carnally minded is death, but to be ſpiritually minded is life and peace; becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom.* viii. 5, 6, 7. And the ſame apoſtle in another place ſays, *and you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, Eph.* ii. 1. There are expreſs declarations that there is no ſuch thing naturally in man, as a free-will to perform acceptable ſpiritual acts: *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy, Rom.* ix. 16. And daring to aſſert a will in man naturally to that which is good, is robbing God of that glory which he aſſumes and claims for himſelf. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, Pſ.* cx. 3. Upon theſe and the like conſiderations, may we not well conclude Mr. *M*'s doctrine to be very erroneous, as well as his method to prove it ridiculous and ſilly.

In the 63d and 64th pages Mr. *M.* I am afraid being deſtitute of a ſenſe of the plague of his own heart, ſneers at Mr. *N*'s aſſerting that the heart of man is carnal, and his mind malignant. But let us turn over the ſacred leaves of ſcripture, and examine how they determine in this point; and they plainly tell us, that our minds *were ſometimes darkneſs, Eph.* v. 8. and *were alienated*, and *enemies by wicked works, Col.* i. 21. ſo that really it would not be an unkind treatment of ſuch a man as our author is, to range him amongſt thoſe that are deſtitute of the light of the glorious Goſpel: nay, if I was to place him amongſt thoſe fools the *Wiſeman* ſpeaks of, who truſt their own heart, I believe every impartial reader would readily ſay, that it is a character he has juſtly drawn down upon himſelf, in being ſo ignorant as to ſneer at the carnality

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and malignancy of the heart and mind of man, when there is ſuch light and evidence to prove the truth of it.

But we go forward to the 68th page; and here we find our author ſummoning all the little ſcanty abilities he can, to prove that all things in this text, *he worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will*, *Eph.* i. 11. are to be underſtood in a confin'd ſenſe. A thing ſurely uncommon, and ſtrange in a man of his complexion, to plead for limitation of general terms. And we would from this hope, that if ever he undertakes to defend Arminianiſm, and overturn the Calviniſtical principles, that he would not be ſo extremely outrageous againſt the Calviniſts for putting a reſtriction upon ſeveral paſſages in ſcripture, when they have greater reaſon to plead for a reſtriction, than what our author produces in favour of his limitations, namely, advancing the honour of God's grace, and diſcovering that there is an harmony and conſiſtency throughout the whole volume of ſcripture. But if Mr. *M.* will not indulge the Calviniſts in ſuch a liberty, yet I am perſuaded the one has as much right to narrow the meaning of ſeveral paſſages in ſacred writ as the other. And God grant that we may be ſo aſſiſted by heaven as that we may never be guilty of corrupting or uſing deceitfully the word of truth; for dreadful indeed is it to wreſt the true genuine ſenſe of any part of revelation.

In ſeveral pages after this we have laſt conſidered, we are tired out with a large collection of repetitions, ſuch as have given me a great deal of uneaſineſs as I read them over, becauſe of the noiſe, rage, and folly that mix, and almoſt make up the whole of them, though indeed they did not have ſuch an effect upon me, as they had upon another perſon, who committed them to the flames, as unworthy to encumber his houſe, or lie as a

load to ſwell the dunghill. I would not entertain ſo ill-natured a thought as to imagine all of it is of this man's production, though indeed he has ſheltered it all under his name; becauſe it is almoſt an impoſſibility to ſuppoſe that a ſingle man, without extraordinary aſſiſtances, can furniſh out ſuch unequalled blunders and folly; no, I would rather think, as many firmly believe, that a whole poſſe of his brethren, full of rancour againſt all Diſſenters, and truth, have been engaged in it, and particularly one, not many miles diſtant from him, who has been unaccountably officious in encreaſing the ſale of this miſerable pamphlet under our hands, and who at other times beſides his yearly fits on the 30th of *January*, has ſaid that the Diſſenters are damned Hereticks, and that he would ſoon make work with them if he had the management of affairs in his own hands. How diſagreeable this inveteracy and rancour is to the temper of the meek, and humble, and merciful Jeſus, and how correſpondent this character is with the character of ſome the apoſtle ſpeaks of, *Rom.* iii. 14. *whoſe mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs*, I leave to the reader, who weighs things impartially, to determine.

We are arrived then thro' a whole train of blunders and follies, to the 80th page; where we find the gentleman putting this queſtion, "Hath "not he that is a man a freedom to chuſe life or "death, to anſwer or reject the calls and invita- "tions of God, to do by the aſſiſtance of the "Grace afforded to him in the Goſpel, what is "ſpiritually good as well as evil?". We anſwer, that the Holy Spirit works in men to will and to do the things that are ſpiritually good, and acceptable to God, is what none of the Calviniſts deny; and that he does this by the means of the Goſpel we readily allow: but that he influences any with

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or without the Goſpel, by his grace, or any other methods, whatſoever to do what is evil, is what we declare an abhorrence of. This I ſay, Mr. *M.* that whenever you reſume your pen, you may take ſpecial care what ſort of language it is you make uſe of to expreſs your mind by; and not load the world with ſuch raw unguarded ſtuff.

We now come to the 103d page, in which he tells his reader "that the freedom of will to ſpiri-"tual and ſupernatural good in the nature of man, "now fallen, is reſtored and renewed by the "grace of Chriſt, that goes with the Goſpel." I will not ſay to this, as Mr. *M.* does in another place, that the man talks divertingly, but that he talks jumblingly; ſo that it muſt be very difficult for ſome to know his meaning, but we cannot but imagine that he aims to ſay, that every man ſince the fall, that hears or reads the Goſpel, is in a ſtate of renewal by the grace of Chriſt going along with it. But we are ſuch an unbelieving ſet of men, that we cannot ſwallow down for truth what he here ſays, unleſs he will be pleaſed to give ſomething of ſubſtantial proof; a thing that he has always took care to neglect and diſregard. As to his begging of the 10th article to help him out, or to make us believe that he has ſaid no more than what that allows of, we anſwer, that there is a great difference between the natural ſenſe of the * article, as is plain to an obſerving reader, and that which he puts upon it: ſo that the poor

* As ſome of my readers perhaps would ſee this 10th article, I beg leave to put it down, "The condition of man "after the fall of *Adam*, is ſuch, that he cannot turn and "prepare himſelf by his own natural ſtrength and good works "to faith, and calling upon God: wherefore we have no "power to do good works, pleaſant and acceptable to God, "without the grace of God by Chriſt preventing us, that we "may have a good will, and working with us, when we "have that good will."

man is no gainer by begging; and we cannot act ſo ſlaviſh and extravagant a part as to give away any thing of our precious faith to an arminian ſtroller, let him approach us under never ſo ſpecious a diſguiſe, and talk never ſo plauſibly.

As to his ſaying it is mere folly to command him that has no power to do what is commanded, and unjuſt to condemn a perſon for what is not in himſelf to perform; let our author take this reply, that though indeed man has ſinned away his power to perform what God has enjoined him, God therefore has not loſt all his right to command him to an obedience of his precepts; nor has thereby no power to puniſh him for a neglect of his duty. God is not obliged to reſtore to any again that ability he firſt gave them, and which they have ſquandered away, in order to appear juſt in commanding them to obedience, tho' indeed to make a full diſplay of his ſovereignty, power, and grace, he is pleaſed to work in ſome a capacity to do what he requires; and if he did not, his laws would be ever trampled upon by the degenerate offspring of *Adam*, who would without ſtrength lie under a broken covenant, accuſing and curſing the law: *For we know*, ſays the apoſtle, *Rom.* vii. 14. *the law is ſpiritual, but I am carnal, ſold under ſin* If a king furniſhed a perſon who was his ſubject with a large ſum to uſe for his intereſt, and the perſon ſhould ſquander it away, would it be unjuſt in the king to puniſh him for it? While the ſcripture tells us of the impotence of man, and requires of ſinners obedience, we are not of thoſe as our author would repreſent us, that aſcribe wickedneſs and injuſtice to God; which heavy unjuſt accuſation ariſes, I believe in great meaſure, either from our author's large fund of ignorance, or ſomething which is ſtill worſe.

We next ſtep to the 107th page, where we muſt have another touch with him, on the head of freewill; for he there with an empty banter ſays, that, tho' Mr. *N.* "himſelf has a byaſs and pro-"penſity to ſchiſm, yet he has a freedom, if he "will, to go to church, according to his bound "duty, (whence did the author ſcrape up this "awkward word bound) to hear, to attend, to "conſider, &c." But let me tell this reverend gentleman, that moſt that knew Mr. *N.* are ſenſible that he had no freedom of will, contrary to what our writer ſuppoſes to go to church, he was ſo much influenced by a byaſs to ſchiſm, as Mr. *M.* calls it; and I am perſuaded that if this heart-ſearching man had heard what Mr. *N.* ſaid of the matter, he would readily agree with me, and numbers elſe in our opinion of him. But I am really inclined to think that Mr. *M.* means by a freedom of will, nothing elſe but a power in Mr. *N.* to go to church, &c. and if ſo, it lay upon our ſcribler, in order to have made what he ſays of real ſervice to Mr. *N.* to inform him what he means by church, and who it is he muſt have given his attendance upon; whether a ſound preacher, or reader, or bawler. And that theſe valuable ends may be anſwered, Mr. *N*'s duty ought to have been ſet in a clear light, elſe might poor Mr. *N.* as he has done, ſtill perſiſt in his ſchiſm, and be ignorant of his bound duty. But I am aware that Mr. *M.* may think this too hard a taſk, and that it is what he is laid under no obligation to perform. But let me tell Mr. *M.* that ſome muſt have *precept upon precept, line upon line, If.* xxviii. 10. and that it is the duty of miniſters *to turn the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt, Luke* i. 17. But if after all, Mr. *M*'s word *freedom*, ſhould be miſtaken, and Mr. *M.* means by a freedom nothing elſe but liberty of going to church, the place of worſhip where Mr. *M.* delivers his elaborate diſ-

courſes,

courſes, Mr. *N.* ſurely ought to have returned hearty thanks to Mr. *M.* for ſo generous an invitation, unaſked for, undeſired, and unexpected, tho' indeed I never heard that Mr. *N.* was ever deſerving of an excommunication from the eſtabliſhed church, or that Mr. *M.* could produce any order that commiſſioned him to bar the doors againſt Mr. *N.*

We paſs on to the 115th page; where we find Mr. *M.* amuſing his readers with a very judicious accurate diſtinction between the words created and born; but I think that I ſhall make it appear that he is one in this caſe whom the apoſtle gives this character, that they ſtrove about words to the ſubverting of the hearers. For it is undeniably plain, from comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual, that the words created and born are uſed promiſcuouſly, and are of the ſame ſignification. *Except a man be born again*, ſays Chriſt, *he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*, *Joh.* iii. 3. And, ſays the apoſtle, *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature*, 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature*, *Gal.* vi. 15.

In the ſame page, what a vaſt deal of blunder, and follies, and rage are crowded into a narrow room! Our author ſays, "that it is certain that "regenerated, that is, children dying before they "commit actual ſin, are undoubtedly ſaved." In anſwer to this, Mr. *N.* allowed, and ſo do the whole body of Calviniſts, that all regenerate perſons, which caſe he ſuppoſes infants to be in, ſhall be undoubtedly ſaved, die when they will, whether in their infancy, or at a hundred years twice told; for being regenerated, they are prepared for glory, and ſhall not be hindered of it, tho' Satan, ſin, and the world, and the whole power of deceivers and falſe teachers try their utmoſt. For when once

once they are hid in the hollow of God's hand, none ſhall be able to pluck them out, but he will *keep them by his power thro' faith unto ſalvation*, 1 *Pet.* i. 5. This I ſay Mr. *N.* allow'd of, with a conſiſtency with the doctrines of Calviniſm, or rather doctrines of the Bible; but then he will not grant, without better proof than what Mr. *M.* produces, that all baptized children are certainly regenerated. Indeed Mr. *M.* has given no ſufficient argument for his ſaying that children are regenerated by baptiſm, but only the mere ſhadow of one. He ſays, "Baptiſm is certainly appointed for the "remiſſion of ſins; they whoſe ſins are forgiven, "are ſaved: ſince therefore infants have no other "ſin but their original corruption, which is remit-"ted in baptiſm, they are undoubtedly ſaved." Not to remark upon the blundering propoſitions of his ſyllogiſm, who does not ſee that his firſt propoſition is entirely falſe? in ſaying that baptiſm is certainly appointed for the remiſſion of ſins, or as he muſt interpret it, that all who are baptized have their ſins remitted? From this plain example we have in ſcripture, *Acts* viii. of *Simon Magus*; this man was baptized, continued with *Philip*, wondering and beholding the miracles and ſigns which were done, but was ſo far from being bleſſed with a remiſſion of ſins, that he offered money to purchaſe the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, upon which *Peter* with all that juſt ſeverity that a miniſter ought to uſe in ſuch caſe, tells him, that his heart was not right in the ſight of God, bids him pray that the thought of his heart might be forgiven him, and upon the whole pronounces him in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity. How ſlender a foundation has the poor man to ſupport his ſentiments. Before I diſpatch this page I would caution the reverend Prieſt not to endeavour to make the world believe that the Calviniſts

viniſts are an uncharitable cruel ſet of men in caſe of infants ſalvation, and that he is ſo charitable. Numbers of the Calviniſtical ſentiments upon the account of the ſcriptures ſpeaking of it very ſparingly, are entirely ſilent on this head, reſerving the whole of it to the conduct of that God whoſe *Judgments are unſearchable, and his ways paſt finding out*, Rom. xi. 33. and are not willing to pry too cloſely into theſe matters, over which God himſelf has drawn a veil of ſecreſy. There is another ſet of men that are far more charitable than Mr. *M.* for it is their opinion that Chriſt has by his death taken away original ſin from all thoſe who die before they are capable of committing any actual tranſgreſſion, and that conſequently there is no queſtion to be made of their eternal welfare. This way of thinking, tho' I freely own it is not my opinion, is far milder and more delightful than that which Mr. *M.* eſpouſes; for this admits of an univerſal ſalvation of infants: whereas, upon Mr. *M*'s hypotheſis, tho' he ſpeaks with ſo much praiſe of it as a mild ſcheme, the far greater number of infants muſt be eternally loſt, as they were never baptized, and ſo conſequently died unregenerate. Unleſs, he ſuppoſes as the wife of a certain clergyman told her neighbour very gravely, the ſouls of unbaptized infants are perpetually hovering in the air; whether ſhe derived it from the profound knowledge of her reverend huſband I will not determine. And that on Mr. *M*'s. ſcheme of none being ſaved but what are baptized, many thouſands, nay the greater bulk of infants will be eternally loſt, is evident from the vaſt numbers of the offspring of the heathens, and the deſcendants of *Quakers* and *Baptiſts* in our nation, dying unbaptized; tho' the latter ſort of people I here mention, with whom I have had the honour of an acquaintance, have been moſt eminent reputations to chriſtianity in the world, have diſcovered a moſt tender regard for the

the eternal welfare of their poſterity, and have by their wholeſome inſtructions and correſpondent practice endeavoured to train their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and how ſhocking is it to conſign all their offspring over to eternal damnation? I am apprehenſive that it may be objected by the reverend ſcribler, that this is only a character of the *Baptiſts* by one of their own denomination; but I can aſſure him, that this excellent character of that people does not proceed from one that ranges himſelf amongſt them that are called *Baptiſts*, tho' indeed it comes from one that would always deſire to pay a regard to, and honour piety, let it appear under what denomination ſoever. Upon the whole, I would adviſe Mr. *M.* to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to perſuade parents to have their children baptized as ſoon as poſſible, leſt they ſhould die before ſuch an important ordinance is over; an ordinance on which depends their eternal welfare. And what ſhall I ſay more; I would only diſpatch this page with ſome weighty reflections and counſel. And I am afraid that this doctrine of baptiſm's regenerating the ſoul, has had very pernicious conſequences. Many I am apprehenſive have been like the *Jews*, boaſting themſelves that they were circumciſed, and others that they had the ordinance of baptiſm adminiſter'd to them, and both laying the weight of their ſalvation on theſe outward ordinances, and thinking that they had a way opened thereby to eternal life, have neglected the enquiry whether they had felt a change in their corrupt natures. And, oh! that miniſters would unite their endeavours for the future to preach the important doctrine of the new birth, and inform their hearers, that if a man is in Chriſt he is a new creature, and that nothing will avail in point of ſalvation, but this: ſo that *except a man be born again, he cannot ſee nor enter into*

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the kingdom of God, *Joh.* iii. 3. and not buoy them up with falſe hopes, and tell them that all ſhall be ſafe as to an eternal world, becauſe of their being baptized, and ſo give them leave to ſpend the whole of their lives in a neglect of all religion, and thereby they not think a ſingle thought of hell 'till they come there. Which manner of behaviour in a miniſter of the Goſpel, muſt certainly be moſt deteſtable in the ſight of the great God of heaven, and will, unleſs divine grace ſteps in, draw down upon their heads the full vials of vengeance. This method of proceeding, namely, fixing our dependance for a happy eternity on this ordinance of baptiſm only, I cannot but perſuade myſelf was put in practice in the firſt ages of chriſtianity, and was one reaſon why the apoſtle *Paul* thanked his God that he baptized none of the *Corinthians* but *Criſpus* and *Gaius*, 1 *Cor.* i. 14. and in a few verſes after adding, that Chriſt ſent him *not to baptize*, *but to preach the Goſpel*, *ver.* 17. The apoſtle was under an apprehenſion that his baptizing ſo few as he did might be a means to prevent many unhappy diviſions and animoſities which might otherwiſe have kindled amongſt them, upon the account of the over-value they might have ſet upon themſelves and the apoſtle, had he baptized them. How timorous was the greateſt apoſtle of any way laying a foundation for pride, ſenſible how ill it appeared in the miniſters of Chriſt, and the people entruſted to their care?

We now proceed to the 124th page; and here we find our opponent dwelling upon the ſame note of general redemption as briskly as ever, and aſſaulting the Calviniſtical ſcheme with a very ingenious, and perplexing queſtion: the enquiry is this, "How is Chriſt a Saviour and Lord, if he is "not the Saviour and Lord of all?" But, Mr. *M.* cannot a perſon be called a king, tho' he is not

not a king of all mankind? or may he not be a king and ſaviour, and yet not a king and ſaviour of all? Would you blame a perſon for being guilty of an impropriety in language, if he was to call another perſon a king or ſaviour, only becauſe he acted the part of a king to ſome perſons, and that of a ſaviour to others? Having thus ſhewn that the words will bear another meaning than what Mr. *M.* puts upon them, I will endeavour to acquaint my readers with the true ſenſe of theſe words, how Chriſt is a king and ſaviour. And if a perſon duly conſiders, he will find that Chriſt is the king of all creatures, as he is their creator and preſerver, tho' he is not their ſaviour. Chriſt is king over the holy angels, but he is not their ſaviour. Chriſt is king over the damned ſpirits, but not their ſaviour. And God grant that neither Mr. *M.* nor I may ever have Chriſt to be our king, and not our ſaviour, by experience; but humbly bow here by faith to the golden ſceptre of his grace, that we may never feel the ſtroke of his iron rod.

But to leave our wrangling peeviſh cuſtomer to himſelf in ſeveral ſucceeding pages, hoping to find him in a better temper another day, we come to the 138th page, were we again find him ſtill harping on his darling topick of univerſal redemption, and endeavouring to ſupport it, not by expreſs language of ſcripture, or propoſing queſtions; but from concluſions plain, eaſy and juſt, drawn from the words of him in whoſe mouth guile was never found. The paſſage is this: *For the ſon of man is come to ſave that which was loſt*, *Mat.* xviii. 11. "Now, ſays he, all mankind was loſt, there-" fore he came to ſave all mankind." I ſuppoſe Mr. *M.* takes that which was loſt univerſally of every one that was loſt, or elſe his ſyllogiſm is falſe; and if he ſays that Chriſt came to ſave all, every one that is loſt, Mr. *M.* takes that for gran-

ted which we will by no means allow, and which is really the point in queſtion; ſo that he muſt either be a down right ſophiſt, or elſe a mere pretender to argument, and nothing elſe. And while the damned in hell, who are reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs, *Judas*, that ſon of perdition, who is ſent long ago to his place, and thoſe whom the apoſtle ſpeaks of, from whom the Goſpel was hid, are the monuments of vindictive wrath; we can never imagine that Chriſt was deſigned for an univerſal ſaviour, or a ſaviour of all that were loſt.

But to leave this, let us ſeriouſly examine into the meaning of the words, *Chriſt came to ſave that which is loſt*, *Mat.* xviii. 11. and we ſhall find that they refer to Chriſt under the character of a ſhepherd: as is evident from the following verſe. Now Chriſt's ſheep were gone aſtray, all had wandered from him, and that he might bring them to his fold, he deſcended from heaven to ſave them from the errors of their ways, and that ruin to which they were expoſed, and that to every individual, as is plain from ſeveral paſſages in ſcripture †. And becauſe he came upon this errand, he ſays, "I "come to ſave that which is loſt." It is much the ſame, for the nature of the thing, as if a perſon ſhould have a flock of ſheep of his own, and theſe ſhould go aſtray from him into a wilderneſs, and he ſhould go after them to ſeek them up, and return them to the fold, and he ſhould tell to any one that enquired of him, that he came into the wilderneſs to ſave his loſt ſheep: Now, would any man from hence conclude, that he had went about to ſeek up all the ſheep throughout the whole face of the earth? or would not he immediately conclude, that his meaning at heart was no more than this, that he had only ſought after thoſe ſheep that were ſtrayed

† *Luke* xv. 4, 5, 6. *John* x. 14, 15, 16. *John* vi. 37, 39.

ſtrayed from his fold? — But to come cloſer to the ſenſe of the words, "I came to ſave that which "is loſt." — And may we not underſtand the words as deſigned, not only to expreſs his care for, and power to recover the loſt ſheep, and to ſhew them their own ſin and miſery by their apoſtacy from God, but alſo their inability to help themſelves, and the inſufficiency of all others beſide himſelf to do it*? Or further, may not the words intimate to us, that Chriſt came to ſave the *Jews* and *Gentiles* undiſtinguiſhed? and ſo Chriſt might ſpeak them in order to put a check upon the ſlight and neglect the *Jews* treated the *Gentiles* with. Or if theſe interpretations will not be ſufficient, tho' they all ſeem to be eſtabliſhed on ſcripture grounds, may we not interpret them of Chriſt's ſaving thoſe who were of the meaner ſort of people, and ſuch as were the greateſt monſters in wickedneſs, as the thief on the croſs, and many others.

HAVING thus, as I hope, given the true ſenſe of the words, I would before I diſpatch this paragraph, tell Mr. *M.* that if his meaning of the words is, that Chriſt came to give every man a power and will to ſave himſelf, he has really been guilty of putting the cart before the horſe, to uſe his own words; for it is as much as if he had ſaid, Chriſt's flock muſt ſeek themſelves up, and by a will and power in themſelves return to Chriſt their ſhepherd. But would not this tend to darken and corrupt the ſimilitude? A ſhepherd's boy would ſay that this was quite contrary to experience in common affairs; and it argues a perſon to be a novice in divinity, who thus ſpeaks about ſpirituals, as well as it caſts a great diſparagement on the freeneſs and riches of grace in our ſalvation, and the power of a ſaviour exerciſed in this important work; both

* *Luke* xv. 5. *Hoſ.* xiii. 9. *Rom.* v. 8. *Acts*, iv. 12.

both which are greatly to be regarded in the affair of our ſalvation.

In the 140th page Mr. *M.* is deeply engaged quoting paſſages from the prayers of the church, and giving them very high commendations, which really gives me no ſmall ſurprize; for if we diligently compare ſome part of his piece, with his talk here, I think he can never clear himſelf of being guilty of notorious contradictions; and if it is not ſo, I think he has been diving in ſuch profound myſteries, that no reader ſurely can comprehend him. Theſe paſſages quoted from the prayers of the church, ſpeak in a direct contradiction to all ability in man to perform any thing ſpiritually good: They deſire God to procure in man faith, repentance turning to God; and confeſs that man has no power to help himſelf: And if ſo, how can our author give ſuch large commendations of theſe paſſages, when he has been, as I have plainly ſhewn, from ſeveral places, eſtabliſhing quite different ſentiments. When I ſeriouſly reflect on this matter, the direct contradiction between mens prayers, and their doctrines and lives, I cannot but expreſs my ſelf in ſome ſuch language as this: "Lord, how is "it that ſome are ſo ignorant, deceitful and pro- "phane, as thus to draw nigh unto thee with their "mouths, and honour thee with their lips, while the "real ſentiments of their hearts are far diſtant "from thee, ſo that they think and write quite "contrary to what they daily profeſs." And when I ſee how ſome of the godly reformers, who conſtantly maintained the Calviniſtical ſentiments, have a large eſteem paid them becauſe of advantage, and have their ſepulchres garniſhed by men of a quite different ſtamp, whoſe principles and practices are at the greateſt diſtance from theirs, I break forth into the language of Chriſt, *Woe unto you, Scribes, Phariſees, and hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited*

whited ſepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanneſs; even ſo ye alſo outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocriſy and iniquity; ye ſerpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye eſcape the damnation of hell? Mat. xxiii. 27, 28, 33. Or elſe I repeat our opponent's words, and return them back upon himſelf, that either this courſe of acting ſprings from a weak head, or diſhoneſt heart; tho' indeed out of the value and reſpect we have to charity, we would rather aſcribe the cauſe to the firſt in ſome; while at the ſame time experience and obſervation teſtify that the latter lays a foundation of ſuch a conduct in others, and that both are united in the affair amongſt numbers beſide.

But to finiſh our remarks on the Supplement, I cannot but think that after on impartial reader has only ran over and paſſed his judgment on theſe matters, he will readily confeſs that Mr. *M*'s doctrines, to the defence of which he has called up all his little abilities, if not the aſſiſtance of as wiſe heads as himſelf, are not only entirely contrary to the ſentiments of the firſt reformers, the pious prayers of the church of *England*, and many ſerious members that are this day of that community, but what is of far greater importance, directly oppoſing the oracles of truth: under which conſiderations we muſt think that Mr. *M.* is not only inconſiſtent with himſelf, but unſound in the faith, and that he has acted unbecoming the character of a chriſtian in his treatment, not only of Mr. *N.* but the whole body of diſſenters in general, and Calviniſts in particular, who are not only his fellow ſubjects, ſuch as pay the ſincereſt value to the preſent government, and apprehend themſelves laid under the ſtrongeſt obligations to diſcover themſelves friends to it; but alſo ſuch as are perhaps the beſt

re-

recommenders of religion by a bright example of ſtrict religion in their converſations and behaviours, if a regard is to be had to the acknowledgment of thoſe that bear no ſincere affection to them. And I ſhould have thought that if Mr. *M.* had laid his hand upon his breaſt, and conſidered that this courſe of piety was duly obſerved by thoſe that put no dependance of ſalvation upon it, he would have ſpar'd his ungenteel, unchriſtian uſage. For ſuppoſe that I laid the weight of my ſalvation either in whole or in part upon my good works; and I ſaw another equalling me, if not out-ſtripping me in piety and religion, that diſclaimed all title to happineſs and ſalvation by them; ſhould not I think that this perſon was in as fair a way for heaven as I was? And ſhould not I be acting very baſely, if he muſt be made the centre of my rage and ſcandal? Imagine that there was one who behaved himſelf as a ſubject to his Majeſty in all reſpects, and was very conſtant in an exact conformity and obedience to his laws and commands, and who at the ſame time acknowledged that his Majeſty was under no obligations to him, and that he deſerved nothing at his hands; pray tell me, Mr. *M.* whether he did not ſtand as fair for preferment, as that perſon who was conſtantly giving a large detail of what he had deſerved at the king's hands, and pleading his own deſerts for an approbation and advance in life? I am ſure you muſt ſay that the firſt is more in the way of a riſe in the world than the latter. And ſo it is betwixt the Calviniſts and Arminians, even granting all that Mr. *M.* would deſire; namely, that the Arminians were inviolably obſervant of piety and religion. Beſides, I ſhould have thought that Mr. *M.* would not have been ſo laviſh of his ſcandal, if he had conſidered that the regular and ſerious Calviniſts have, with reverence be it ſpoken, a double chance for ſalvation: If it is of works, they

they have as large a ſtore to produce as the beſt Arminian; if it is wholly of grace, they will be, as they aſcribed all the glory and praiſe to that, eternally happy, while the others muſt expect nothing elſe but a looking for of judgment to devour them. Lay theſe things to heart, Mr. *M.* and at the ſame time examine whether the rage and fury ſome have thrown upon the Calviniſts has not in ſome meaſure took its riſe from the ſtrict piety they have beheld ſhining thro' their whole conduct, and their fixed ſteady reſolution never to run into the ſame exceſs of riot with them, and whether they would have ever dipped their pens in gall, and brandiſhed them againſt them, if they would have conformed to ſeveral of their irregularities.

BEFORE I enter on the APPENDIX, I think it is highly proper to inſert a note or two that have a particular regard to my reverend antagoniſt, and myſelf, to moderate him concerning what may, upon firſt ſight, offend him in my Remarks; for I muſt own, that altho' I would not give any juſt offence to thoſe that are diſtinguiſhed in the church for their high ſtations, yet a regard to truth, and a want of a fluency in language, have compelled me to drop a great deal of matter and expreſſion that will not be very acceptable to our author, tho' I am very ſenſible that I fall, I had almoſt ſaid, infinitely ſhort of our writer in unwelcome rough uſage. And here I would acquaint my adverſary, that my piece will anſwer two of the moſt valuable ends.

(1.) THERE is a probability of its affording him an uncommon ſhare of pleaſure. And however odd this may appear, yet the truth of it will eaſily be ſeen, if we do but conſider what an unaccountable itch Mr. *M.* has for ſcribling; for if he had not ſuch a ſtrong inclination to it, how

could it poſſibly come about that he ſhould blunder on for ſuch a length of years, in waſting ink and paper, with ſmall encouragement, on the ſame ſubject, and without varying as to ſeveral things, only as to expreſſion, and that to ſcandalize and injure a miniſter of fourſcore years old, rendered incapable to review and defend his ſentiments, and who had told the publick in his book, that he would not make a reply to any attacks made upon him? I ſay, if he had not an uncommon itch for ſcribling, how could theſe things be? And if he has ſuch a turn for blundering out his laborious compoſitions, I have now given him a fair opportunity to gratify his taſte in an honourable way. And now the poor man, who might be almoſt deſpairing that he ſhould have no more ſcribling work for him to do, may clear his ſinking ſpirits with the proſpect of having employ carved out for him the remainder of his days; for I will not be ſo hard-hearted as not to promiſe him that he ſhall not go unnoticed, if he thinks proper to ranſack his own brains, or call up the aſſiſtance of his neighbouring brethren, to form a reply to what I have here drawn up. Thus I have prov'd that what I have here preſented the world with, is calculated for the unſpeakable pleaſure of Mr. *M.*

(2.) My remarks on Mr. *M*'s writings will certainly be of great profit to him. This gentleman's works at preſent lie as inſignificant lumber upon his hands † if ſome circumſtances be true; and if ſo, he may have an opportunity perhaps of vending his worthy pieces, and thereby have a return of his money expended in printing of them; and upon

† Let not the reader take it amiſs if I blend a little, that may raiſe his delight, with what I have ſaid. One of Mr. *M*'s intimates and bretheren, as ſenſible that he was better formed for a tradeſman than a divine, and that the ſale of his brother's pieces was very bad, while numbers of young people were ſport

upon this account, in his reply I would desire him, nay shall expect him, to make a publick acknowledgment of the favours I have done him. And besides, our joint endeavours in writing, will likewise be a means of promoting publick trade, and the more trade is promoted, the surer his tythe, so that it will do him a kindness in the end, for our united strength, especially the indefatigable attempts of his brethren, cannot possibly fail of making them have a swift sale. And let the worst that can come, happen, these our writings can be sold by the pound for waste paper, or serve for the chandler or grocer to tie up his wares with. Thus I have sufficiently proved that the remarks I have drawn up will be of considerable pleasure and profit to Mr. *M.*

THERE are two or three things that had almost slipt my notice, which may very properly find a place here, seeing they have an immediate reference to Mr. *M.* and myself. The first is a humble petition that Mr. *M.* would grant me patiently my own time, if I should chance to set about drawing up a supplement to my remarks. The next request I make is, that when he sets about his next reply, he would spin the cobwebs from his

sporting and trifling at a feast, ordered to be fixed up the title-page of Mr. *M*'s last valuable performance, in a place that was both fitted to give it sanction and correction, I mean the ch---ch and st---ks, (tho' indeed it was nearer the latter than the former, it being better suited for that place than the other. Whether it was done from design or good luck, I cannot determine; this uncommon accident drew all the eyes of the young people upon it, and fixed them in a deep admiration and amaze, as well it might: for I cannot think they, or any others, had ever heard of the like before. How the market went as to this book, or who had the best trade, the apple-woman, toy-man, fiddler, or reverend bookseller, I cannot determine; I am likewise entirely ignorant with what benefit it was read by the young creatures; but I fancy my reader and I can give an easy and very true guess. This may be sufficient to prove in part that Mr. *M*'s pieces sell off dully.

own brain, and not take his ſtrange fire from his neighbouring brethren, and try for once whether he cannot after nine years aſſiſtance, go without their friendly aſſiſtance. A third thing, that I would entreat of Mr. *M.* is, that he would not load his pages with quotations from, or references to ſuch abuſive authors, as he has done in his former pieces, eſpecially the countermine, leſt we ſhould perplex him with inſertions from ſuch ſatirical writers as thoſe who drew up the *Independent Whig*. A fourth favour that I would crave at his hands is, that he would adviſe all thoſe to whom he recommends his performances, to ſupply themſelves with what I here offer the publick, that by laying aſide all prejudices, they might form a judgment, by a ſtrict enquiry, whether theſe principles that Mr. *M.* maintains, or thoſe that I here bear my teſtimony to, are true. And having requeſted theſe four things at his hands, which I think he cannot in juſtice deny me, I would addreſs myſelf to my reader, whoſe mind is balanc'd with ſeriouſneſs; and I would beg of ſuch a one, let him appear under what character ſoever, not to be offended with me for the roughneſs that I have treated this trifling author with: for I ſolemnly declare, that it would ſtrike like an arrow into my inmoſt ſoul, if he ſhould be any ways diſpleaſed with it; for the regard of ſuch a one is that I moſt ſincerely value; his temper of mind, that I moſt love; and his profit and good that I aim at, in all my labours, next to the glory of my God, and the eternal happineſs of my ſoul. And in order that ſuch a one may be the more ſecurely guarded againſt any offence at my preſent proceedings, let him conſider what ſort of perſons I have to engage with, and into whoſe hands this piece will moſt probably fall, and then ſee if I have not purſued the example of *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 27.

And

And it came to paſs at noon, that Elijah *mocked them, and ſaid, Cry aloud, for he is a God, either he is talking, or he is purſuing, &c.* and whether I have not obſerved the command that *Solomon*, the wiſeſt man, gave, who ſays, *Prov.* xxvi. 5. *Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.* It would have been far more agreeable to me to have wrote in a ſolemn ſerious ſtrain thro' the whole of my piece; and it was a conſtraint and compulſion upon me to write otherwiſe, in order to quell the rage and ſcandal of ſuch as our author. Pardon, me then I ſay, courteous pious reader, and let me, notwithſtanding this, find a ſhare in your regard and prayers, which will make me bear up under all the ſcoffs and reproaches of thoſe abandoned wretches, who are ſuch ſworn enemies to any thing of true godlineſs, as to run out into the moſt notorious debaucheries, and can, not only when they have proved their near relation to the filthy ſwines, by drowning their ſenſe and reaſon in drunkenneſs, but alſo in their more ſober hours, belch out the moſt ſhocking blaſphemies againſt heaven, and with the flames of hell on their tongues, doom the Diſſenters to that dreadful place, nay, every one that is not ſo miſerable as to ſhare in their eſteem. Not conſidering that the very God whom they have here ridiculed, will 'ere long ſummon them to his bar, and will puniſh them for all the ungodly ſpeeches, that they have either uttered againſt him, or one that bore his ſacred image.

We are now come to the *Appendix*, and we find it juſt the ſame, for nature, as the other part of his book, on which account no man ſurely can with any reaſon put them aſunder; for in the firſt page he charges us with ſaying, that Mr. *N.* and thoſe of his way, *lay a mighty ſtreſs upon the knowledge of the time of their inward call or converſion.* Now this is falſe; for tho' we maintain that ſuch a change

change must pass upon a person, before he is admitted into the kingdom of God, and therefore press persons to seek after the knowledge of it, that they might open the door for comfort, and that pleasure which is peculiar to believers to enter; and tho' we are sensible that many a close walker with God could by certain evidence determine the time of conversion; yet we do at the same time firmly believe, that some that have this good work begun on their souls, are so far from fixing the time when they were effectually called, that they dare not pronounce themselves in such a happy state. As to his saying that it is our opinion, that *this call is an infallible sign of election*, he is very right, for it is a part of our standing faith; and we have the testimony of the word of God on our sides: *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified, &c. Rom.* viii. 30. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure*, 2 *Pet.* i. 10. On the account of which evidences we are not ashamed of our hope and faith, notwithstanding our author in his pert air of assurance, can give it no better a name than dangerous delusion.

In the same page this enemy of righteousness bursts out into very virulent injurious reflections; one of which shall not pass unnoticed. *When God was pleased to call me*, says good Mr. N. *by his grace, it was in a hot persecuting time*; at which Mr. *M.* thro' his superfluity of charity remarks, *observe the cloven foot*. I may say, observe the serpent's sting in Mr. *M.* for if ever it appeared under the specious disguise of a rose and surplice, it certainly discovers itself now. Here is a plain hint given us that our author fully approves of those rigid and severe laws imposed upon the Dissenters in the last age, and those cruelties that the Dissenters underwent at that time;

time; and I find that what his bluſtring brother threatned he would do againſt the Diſſenters if the management of affairs was committed to him, would be ſeconded by this our forward opponent. But we have reaſon to bleſs our God, that, tho' their hearts are big with fury, their hands are tied from executing their purpoſes. Hence we may be cautioned from fixing any dependance in any of theſe furious creatures, leſt we ſhould meet with ſuch a variety of cruel uſage as the Diſſenters have long before this experienced.

In the 146th page we find him writing bitter things againſt the Diſſenters, as if they would overturn the eſtabliſhed church; but why theſe hard thoughts ſhould be admitted any more concerning thoſe that ſeparate from the church of *England*, than thoſe that break off from the church of *Scotland*, let our *Scotchman* tell? As to his injurious reflections upon the Diſſenters, in ſaying *that they think it perſecution to be kept out of offices civil and military*; pray acquaint me, Mr. Politician, what evil ſo great have theſe men been chargeable with, that they muſt be bar'd from doing the king all that ſervice they can in a publick ſphere, when they have integrity and genius to recommend them equal to what others have. Pray, who appeared ſo rebellious in *Preſton* fight, were they Tories or Diſſenters? Who will venture to ſay, with ſubſtantial proof that the Diſſenters are for introducing the *Pretender* to the throne? And who ſo ignorant, or who ſo vile, as to ſay that the High-flying churchmen are not friends to him in their hearts? Is there no method to ſecure the ſafety of the church, Mr. *M.* but by infringing upon the liberties of the Diſſenters, in excluding them from publick offices. I ſhould think really that it was a moſt effectual way of bringing down ruin upon the eſtabliſhed church, in that the vileſt of men,

when

when they come to ſuſtain publick offices in life, are admitted to that holieſt of ordinances, the lord's-ſupper, as the door to which they paſs to, and arrive at preferments. But to leave theſe political matters, let us attend to the contradictory confeſſion of this reverend author; for almoſt immediately after he declares *his abhorrence of perſecuting for religion*. How ſlily is the ſerpent's ſting that was darted out, drawn in again. But, honeſt reader, how muſt we take this man, who ſpeaks ſo counter to what he inſinuated before? muſt we think in charity, that he has been † griped in his conſcience, and ſo by this means has ſuddenly paſſed under a change of temper? Muſt we imagine that he has forgot himſelf by reaſon of a diſordered head? Or muſt we imagine that he compoſed the latter end of the laſt page in ſummer time, and reſerv'd the beginning of the next to the following winter? and ſo, as there was a viſible alteration of the weather, think that he underwent a viſible alteration in his temper. Or did he draw up the latter end of the 145th page, and ſome one of his reverend neighbours the reſt? That there is a contradiction is manifeſt; but what is the reaſon, I believe none of us can determine.

As to his ſaying that there is not one text of ſcripture in which God has promiſed his help in extempore prayers, I may enquire of him, on the contrary, in what part of ſcripture God has appointed any to draw up forms of prayer? and what he thinks of that place, where the apoſtle ſays, *We know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helps our infirmities*, *Rom.* viii. 26. Now they that are always chained down to a book, if they have eye-ſight and learning enough, can never be at a ſtand for any deficiency of matter, never can ſay, we do not know how to pray as we ought.

† His own darling phraſe.

ought. I might add the numerous examples of *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Hezekiah*, *Daniel*, *&c.* praying without forms, with a large variety of ſcriptures to ſupport extempore prayer; but I think I have ſaid enough to convince the impartial reader, and deſtroy our author's confident aſſertion.

But let us conſider what a ſhew of reverence he aſſumes, when he ſays, that *it is much more probable, that a man who for fear of offending God dare not adventure into his preſence without a well-digeſted form, is a more welcome ſupplicant than he who appears raſhly before him, without conſidering what he is to aſk, &c.* And here I am terribly afraid Mr. *M.* has condemned himſelf, when he ſays we muſt come into the preſence of God with a well-digeſted form: for if we compare his ſentiments, with thoſe that are wrapt up in his prayers, it looks as if he was a very great ſtranger to the expreſſion and matter, and that he had not well digeſted his prayers. As to that reverence and humility with which we ought to addreſs God in prayer, we plead up for them as well and as ſtrongly as our author: Nor do we act counter to it in extempore prayer; for cannot a poor ſtarving wretch ſpread his caſe before one whom he knows has power to relieve him, with as much humility by word of mouth, as he could with reading over his caſe from a printed book. I am afraid that this is a voluntary humility in praying with a form, and I would adviſe our author to have a peculiar regard, leſt he does not, by pleading for it, open the door to the Papiſts introducing their voluntary humility in not daring to approach to God and Chriſt themſelves, but uſing the aſſiſtance of ſubordinate mediators, as ſaints, angels, *&c.*

In page 149. Mr. *M.* tho' he ſtill goes under the character of a miniſter of Chriſt, like *Iſhmael*, and one born after the fleſh, mocks him who is born after the Spirit. Mr. *N.* gives an account of

the methods God took with him in tranſlating him from the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of light, in theſe words: *Under this ſore temptation, namely of being hardned under the means, I reſolved to hear no more, and was going out of the meeting; but as I was going along, the man prayed earneſtly that God would be pleaſed to ſhew mercy on ſome one ſoul here, repeating it over again. Upon this I ſtopt, and pauſing on it a while, thought I, God hath laid this on his heart to pray for me; I knew he could not ſee me; thought I, here is none here in a bad condition but myſelf, ſo this ſtayed me from going out. I then returned again to a table on the ſide of the room, and leaning down on it, with a heavy burthen on my heart, thought I was heavy enough to break down that table.* I ſay, Mr. *N.* gives this account of his converſion; and Mr. *M.* ſurely in a temper of mind far different to and perpetually diſallowed of by expreſs texts of ſcripture, and the excellent examples we have in Chriſt, and his followers, of brotherly affection, remarks thus: "A more flagrant inſtance of enthuſiaſm can "ſcarce be given. Here is no Goſpel rule to walk "by, but mere imagination, and animal heats; "ſo that I defy him to prove that theſe were ef-"fects of divine impreſſions. It may be eaſily "accounted for mechanically. Hence when his "black blood chanced to be ſweatned by a mix-"ture of better, *&c.*" Before I proceed to defend Mr. *N*'s ſentences and matter, I would aſk of any one perſon, whether here is any thing in our author's obſervations that proves Mr. *N.* to be in ſuch a fit of enthuſiaſm, as he aſſerts he was? Our author indeed takes it for granted, which indeed is the queſtion in debate, that Mr. *N.* had no Goſpel rule to walk by, but mere imagination, and animal heats, and then infers that Mr. *N.* could not prove that theſe were the effects of divine impreſſions. How ridiculous this is in a perſon that aſſumes the name of a ſcholar, and

a miniſter, I leave the honeſt thoughtful plowman to determine. But that we might reſcue Mr. *N.* from the rage of ſuch a turbulent ſpirit, let us conſider, that Mr. *N.* thought indeed he could have expreſſed himſelf in more refined language, yet might chuſe to relate the methods and circumſtances of his converſion in the moſt free and condeſcending language, not only to render it eaſy to be underſtood by the narroweſt capacities, but to ſhew that when he was a child in religion he thought and ſpake as a child: juſt as if we ſhould repeat, when we are grown up to manhood, ſome ſentences that we dropt in our childhood in all that ſimple unwary expreſſion that children uſe. Nor is this all that we can plead in behalf of Mr. *N.* for if we look into the ſcriptures, we ſhall find that though they do not in ſo many words ſpeak the ſame things as Mr. *N.* yet they intimate the ſame, and ſo might give Mr. *N.* a foundation for ſpeaking ſo ſtrongly of the weight of his ſins. Doth not the apoſtle ſay, *Rom.* viii. 22. *The whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now?* Which words certainly muſt be underſtood in a figurative ſenſe, and are only deſigned to expreſs things in the moſt ſtrong ſtriking manner. But to come nearer to our point, does not the Pſalmiſt cry out, *Pſ.* xxxviii. 4. *For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me?* And does not God himſelf condeſcend to ſpeak in ſuch a manner, *Am.* ii. 13. *Behold I am preſſed under you, as a cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves?* And when Chriſt invites ſinners to come to him, their characters are, that they *labour and are heavy laden, Mat.* xi. 28. And the apoſtle *Paul, Rom.* vii. 24. in a vehement ſtrain crys out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this death?*

Thus we ſee that Mr. *M.* has been ridiculing what he is unacquainted with, and what has the

greateſt foundation in ſcripture. And ſince it is ſo, I fancy that he would behave himſelf in ſuch matters as a certain clergyman did, who being told by a woman the great anguiſh of ſoul ſhe was in upon account of her ſinful ſtate by nature, enquired whether ſhe had been chargeable with any notorious crime? But, being anſwered by the perſon, that it was purely her ſinful nature that gave her the uneaſineſs of mind; he bids the woman go and adviſe with ſome ſkilful phyſician, for ſhe was certainly touched in her head, and ſo did not come under his notice. Shameful inſtance! wretched divine!

But, chriſtians, under all this ignorance that diffuſes itſelf thro' the minds of thoſe that have aſſumed the miniſterial character, and all the ſcandal and contempt they caſt upon us, let us not be in the leaſt aſhamed, as being ſenſible *that the weakneſs of God is ſtronger, and his fooliſhneſs is wiſer than that ſtrength and wiſdom which ſuch numbers boaſt of*, 1 *Cor.* i. 25. and that we have God pleading our cauſe from his own word, and have the ſerious part of men, not only thoſe among the Diſſenters, but likewiſe many of * the church of *England*, teſtifying the ſame with us from their own experience. I ſhall conclude with a hearty requeſt, that God would *not only enlighten our underſtandings more and more, to know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints, and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him on his own right hand*; but *that we may ſhew forth the praiſes of him who hath called us out of darkneſs into his marvellous light*; and that he would furniſh us with a readineſs of mind

* I am very well pleaſed to hear that a worthy divine of the eſtabliſhed church had formed a deſign of writing againſt Mr. *M.* and that others declare with ſuch a holy zeal againſt his miſerable productions.

mind either to go thro' evil report or good report, and ſuffer ſhame for his name and the cauſe of truth, having the teſtimony of our good conſciences on our ſides, and knowing that our witneſs is in heaven, and our record on high, even with that God who will in a little time do juſtice to himſelf, to truth and his oppreſſed ſuffering people, while he pours out his fury upon them that dare open their mouths againſt him and his people. And while we are thus ſpreading our petitions before God, let us beg in the ſincerity of our hearts, and with holy earneſtneſs, that God, by a diſplay of his almighty power and rich grace, would convince, convert, and eternally ſave our opponent; or at leaſt confound, and hedge up his way from doing any farther injury to the cauſe of God and truth: Any of which valuable ends, if I might be ſo happy as to attain, I ſhall have a full reward for theſe weak endeavours for the intereſt of God and religion.

As I am well aſſured that there is but one ſhort form of prayer throughout the whole book of God, which agrees with Mr. *M*'s doctrine and ſpirit, namely that of the Phariſee, where he ſays, *I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publican; I faſt twice a week, I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs*, Luke xviii. 11. I have in order to expoſe our author's blaſphemy and folly, drawn up ſuch a form of prayer as I am poſitive every impartial reader will ſay is exactly turned to the complexion of his mind, if he would ſpeak plainly; and therefore he ſhould always pray as follows:

" O Lord God, though thou wert before all
" things, and all are the work of thine
" hands, yet thou art not inveſted with ſuch a

" love

" ſovereign power as to do whatſoever pleaſeth
" thee with thy creatures; and tho' mankind
" have apoſtatized from thee, yet without a re-
" gard to their works, thou canſt not in juſtice
" extend grace and mercy to one, and neglect to
" give ſuch bleſſings to another, tho' ſome are
" ſo notoriouſly ignorant as to put the queſtion
" to their fellows, who maketh thee to differ from
" another? and are ſwelled with ſuch ill-grounded
" imaginations as to ſay, that thou manifeſteſt
" thy ſelf to them as thou doſt not to the world,
" and conceit that thou haſt given them the
" knowledge and experience of divine things,
" while thou denieſt ſuch favours to men that are
" vaſtly their ſuperiours; and at the ſame time im-
" pudently aſſert, that thou art acting in a way of
" juſtice and righteouſneſs, and therefore break
" out with a blind zeal, and ſay, O the depth of
" the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge
" of God! how unſearchable are the judgments,
" and his ways paſt finding out! But, Lord, I
" now bear my teſtimony againſt all this mad-
" neſs and blaſphemy in the moſt open free man-
" ner; for I by my endeavours have found thee
" out, even ſo perfectly, that I find theſe things
" are ſo contrary to thy nature and juſtice, that
" thou wouldſt be the worſt of all beings, and
" moſt cruel tyrant, if what they ſay and believe
" had any truth with it, on which account I dare,
" I will reply againſt thy ſovereignty in this af-
" fair. And tho' I do not deny but thou didſt
" decree to chuſe ſome men to ſalvation before the
" world was, yet I will boldly maintain that if it
" was not upon the account of good works,
" which thou didſt foreſee in them, as the moving
" cauſe, it muſt be only thy purpoſe to chuſe ſome,
" and not a determination who they were, till thou
" didſt fully try their behaviours in the world.
" And I own before thee, that thou didſt ſend

" thy

" thy ſon into the world, to ſave me and every
" one beſides, ſo that all may be ſaved if they
" will. And tho' I read, he ſhall ſee of the tra-
" vail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied; yet he hath
" not done more for one individual of the hu-
" man race than he has done for another: ſo that
" if any are ſaved by Chriſt, it is of themſelves;
" for if they were not better than others, all of
" them would be loſt, and ſo the ſhedding of
" Chriſt's blood would be in vain. And I declare
" with the greateſt zeal againſt thoſe that imagine
" otherwiſe than that Chriſt died as much for *Judas*
" as for *Peter*; and I will ſay, that if I am ſaved,
" I ſhall not owe any more to thy love, than
" one eternally confined in the priſon of hell. I
" alſo will aſſert, that I have a will and power to
" do all thou requireſt of me for ſalvation, and
" ſo have all others, notwithſtanding their fall in
" *Adam*: to will and to do is preſent with us; all
" neceſſary good dwells in us; and 'tis of him
" that wills and runs, and not of mere mercy; and
" all of us ought to build on this ſure foundation.
" And as we have will and power enough, there
" is no manner of occaſion to cry to thee for
" them, or to depend on Chriſt, but it is only ne-
" ceſſary to praiſe thee on the account of their be-
" ing in us: for I am ſo far from thinking that I
" am not able to perform any thing ſpiritually
" good, and that I muſt live in a perpetual de-
" pendance on Chriſt, that I deteſt theſe no-
" tions, and will unite with thoſe who ſaid they
" were rich, and increaſed in goods, and had
" need of nothing. And I was ſo born again
" in baptiſm, that if for the remainder of my
" days I am ſtrict to the duties of morality, there
" will be no reaſon for me to look out any far-
" ther, and I may ſit me down eaſy, and con-
" tented, as if I had never knew the defilement of
" ſin. And as to the work of the Spirit, which

" ſome

" ſome ſenſeleſs enthuſiaſts roam of, in convincing
" mankind of their ſin, and the miſery that ſtands
" connected with it, and leading them to Chriſt,
" as a phyſician, and a fountain to waſh in; as
" likewiſe the Holy Ghoſt's witneſſing that perſons
" are the children of God, and ſealing them to
" the day of redemption by the promiſes of the
" new covenant: All this is moſt vile blaſphemy
" and folly, for I neither know what it is to cry
" out, God be merciful to me, a ſinner, or what
" they mean that talk of being in an undone
" ſtate by nature; but on the other hand can,
" and will glory over all ſuch ignorant deluded
" creatures, and rejoice that I am not as the Cal-
" viniſts, or an old canting wretch that lately
" lived yonder, perſons better fitted for *Bedlam*
" here, as they muſt burn for ever in hell's torments
" hereafter. I am perſuaded that I am every way
" ſuited to ſerve thee in the greateſt work in thy
" church on earth, if not equal to the ſervices of
" the upper world, and therefore I will pronounce
" damnation on thoſe that turn their backs on my
" miniſtry, and frequent conventicles, in that they
" leave a *wiſe*, *learned*, *regular*, and *rightful* mini-
" ſter, to hear a parcel of ſtuff about free grace,
" and living upon Chriſt, pour'd out by ſhame-
" leſs ſenſeleſs Fanaticks. Thus will I, O Lord, go
" on glorying in and of my ſelf, and hope I
" ſhall do ſo when I come to die, and likewiſe at
" the day of judgment, when I ſhall triumph over
" thoſe that might have been ſaved as well as I
" if they would, and ſhall then ſay, Not unto
" mercy and truth, but to my own name, be all
" the glory of my ſalvation, world without end,
" *Amen*."

FINIS.